





Bob, a Mounted Scout with the Wagon Train

Bob, the Pioneer

Telephoned
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S. M. BARRETT
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HARLOW PUBLISHING CORPORATION
Oklahoma City
1938

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FOREWORD

The adventurous, the strong, and the courageous often become pioneers. The timid and the weak usually remain in sheltered abodes where dangers may not come; where leisure is found, and where arduous tasks are not continuous. The people who went into the primeval forests of America and carved out homes thus opening the way for millions to follow in safety and with comfort were courageous, industrious and strong.

The pioneer found little time or desire for frivolities, fine clothes or fashions. Necessity set the style in his life, testing his endurance and setting limits to his activities. Events over which he had no control often put his courage to the most severe tests. To obtain food,

shelter and clothing required the maximum of exertion, usually in solid labor, even during childhood and youth. In all situations the pioneer acted upon his own initiative and thus he became thoroughly established in courage and industry; strong in body, and reliable in character.

S. M. BARRETT

CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Chapter I—Bobbie and the Bear . .	1
Chapter II—Bobbie and the Turkey's Nest	9
Chapter III—Bobbie's Work . . .	16
Chapter IV—Bobbie's Recreation .	24
Chapter V—Bobbie's Journey across the Mountains to Grandfather Brown's Home	33
Chapter VI—Bobbie's Long Journey through the Mountain Country and Far West	48
Chapter VII—Bobbie's Long Jour- ney—Meeting Difficult Duties .	61
Chapter VIII—Bobbie's Long Jour- ney—New Experiences . . .	69
Chapter IX—Bobbie's Long Journey —Along the Open Road . . .	81
Chapter X—Bobbie's Long Journey —In Missouri	91
Chapter XI—Bobbie's School Days .	99
Chapter XII—The Year of the Big Snow	115

Chapter XIII—Changes as the Years Went By	126
Chapter XIV—On the Santa Fe Trail	133
Chapter XV—Indians	141
Chapter XVI—Cimarron Crossing .	157
Chapter XVII—Bob's Last Trip across the Plains	174

ILLUSTRATIONS

Bob, a Mounted Scout with the Wagon Train . .	FRONTISPIECE
The Hounds Had Trailed a Bear .	4
The Hounds Find a Panther . .	12
On Came the Buck—Bobbie Dodged from Tree to Tree	20
Elk, Caught by the Storm, Were Living Off the Hay	116
The Buffalo Stampede	132
The Attack Came Swiftly . . .	148
Jim Bridges Leads the Parley . .	164

Bob, the Pioneer

CHAPTER I

BOBBIE AND THE BEAR

Far up in the mountainous regions of eastern Tennessee, more than a century ago, was a log cabin home. In this lonely place lived Bob, or Bobbie as he was called when a tiny boy.

His was truly a pioneer abode, remote from other homes. It was in mid-afternoon when Bobbie wearing new trousers with pockets in them—his first clothes just like his father's—decided to go hunting. Not only had his mother made the trousers, but she had carded the wool and woven the jeans of which she made them. In order to look more like Daddy, Bobbie had on his father's hat. Bobbie told his mother he was going to take the dogs and go hunt-

BOB, THE PIONEER

ing, and out he went. Closing the door he called as lustily as he could, "Here, Drum! Here, Lead! Here, Blue!" In obedience to his call, the three great old hounds, leaders of his father's pack of hunting dogs, arose, stretched lazily in the warm sunshine and slowly came to their little master, their little man-god. These hounds were Bobbie's only companions and playfellows for there were no other children near this place, except baby sister, Grace, and she was too little to play out-of-doors.

The leaders of the pack, Drum, Lead, and Blue, were fond of Bobbie but they were too lazy to play with him very much. However, they came sometimes when he called, and they went with him occasionally when he roamed about among the trees of the dense forest that stood near his home. The hounds were Bobbie's only pals. The field on one side

BOBBIE AND THE BEAR

of the cabin and the forest on the other side were his playgrounds.

Since Bobbie's father and his friends often went hunting, Bobbie frequently played "going hunting." Now he was going hunting by himself way out past the barn lot and beyond the brook. After crossing the brook Bobbie turned back toward the cabin, for he was not allowed to go alone far into the great forest. At last he got old Drum to romp and play with him but when the hound ran through the brook and leaped playfully against the boy toppling him over and soiling the new trousers with wet, muddy feet, play ceased. Old Drum fled for safety as Bobbie scolded and tried to pelt the dog with stones. When the boy chased the dog past the cabin, the door opened and Bobbie's mother called him inside where he stood by the open fireplace to dry his clothes.

BOB, THE PIONEER

Sometimes neighbors came to hunt with Bobbie's father and the boy always wanted to go with them. Not until Bobbie was six years old did his father ever agree to take him. The mother thought it very unwise for Bobbie's father to permit the boy to go with the hunting party but on a certain beautiful moonlight night when the hunters did not intend to stay out very late or to go very far, and since Bobbie's grandfather was going with the hunters and asked that the boy might accompany them Bobbie was permitted to go.

Occasionally, Bobbie was hoisted up on the shoulders of his father or some one of the other mountaineers, where he rode gleefully; at other times he trotted along as fast as he could to keep up with the hunters.

The hunting dogs ran out into the woods and it was not long until the



The Hounds Had Trailed a Bear

BOBBIE AND THE BEAR

hounds struck a trail. By the manner of their baying, the hunters knew that they were on the trail of big game. After awhile the pack was in full cry going northward, but soon it was noted that they were coming back toward the hunters.

Believing that the hounds were chasing a deer, and feeling certain that it would follow the deer trail and cross the deer run up on top of the ridge, Bobbie's father placed the child in a rock-walled corner of the cliff, telling him to stay there until he and the other men came back. Then the hunters rushed up the mountain side to intercept the quarry as it crossed the well-known run or deer trail. Just as they reached the summit, the dogs suddenly changed their tone and turned aside. In a few minutes a loud baying and frequent howling punctuated now and then by Bobbie's shrill,

BOB, THE PIONEER

"Sick 'em, Drum! Sick 'em, Lead! Sick 'em, Blue!" brought great fear to the hearts of hunters for then they realized that the pack had left off chasing the deer for bigger game, and it was a bear that the hounds were now chasing; also, that he had turned to fight the dogs near where Bobbie was. On rushing down they found Bobbie in the midst of the pack, which was led by his three pals. Frantically, Bobbie was urging the dogs on in a fight with the bear. Bobbie's father, being the first upon the scene, immediately shot the bear. The grandfather rescued Bobbie as the hounds rushed over him to get at the erstwhile dangerous but now fallen enemy.

As the tumult subsided, Bobbie, cuddled up in his grandfather's strong arms, said in a quavering voice, "Granddad, I'm scared."

"Oh, no!" said the old man, "You

BOBBIE AND THE BEAR

are a big man now, Bobbie. You and Drum, Lead and Blue fought a big bear all by yourselves."

"But I'm scared," persisted Bobbie.

Next, the whining of faithful old Drum attracted the attention of the hunters and when Bobbie saw how bloody and torn his old pal was he added his childish crying to Drum's labored whining. Old Drum's wounds were treated first and then the bear was skinned by the expert mountaineers, cut into four parts, and to each of the four families represented in the hunting party was allotted one quarter of the bear meat. What about the hide? All agreed it should be Bobbie's.

Laden with plenty of meat and Bobbie's trophy, the bear hide, the hunters returned to the cabin. Grandfather carried Drum for the old dog's leg was

BOB, THE PIONEER

broken. Bobbie was so shaken and distressed that the men carried him also.

Bobbie was first to enter their cabin and it was he who told mother and little sister, Grace, how he and the hound dogs had fought a great bear. Then with trembling lips while he used all of his will power to keep back the tears, he said, "But Drum is hurt."

For days old Drum lay in a temporary shelter built for him, and Bobbie and little sister were his attendants. It was a long time before Drum was in condition to lead the pack in another bear hunt and a long, long time before Bobbie forgot that night's experience. Perhaps he never forgot. Who knows?

CHAPTER II

BOBBIE AND THE TURKEY'S NEST

It was early autumn when Bobbie had his first real bear hunt. It was mid-winter before Drum was able to go about with the other hounds, and then the bears were all asleep for the winter. But, at any rate, Bobbie's mother would not have consented for her little man to go on a bear hunt again.

In due time winter passed, the sun became warmer and warmer, the snows melted from the mountain side and spring time came once more. Then every day Bobbie's father went to work in his field down in the valley nearly a mile distant. Here he worked all day plowing and planting. Bobbie was left to do certain tasks and to play with little sister

BOB, THE PIONEER

or amuse himself with the hounds as best as he could.

One morning Bobbie's mother told him to watch the turkey hen. "She has a nest somewhere, but like all other turkey hens, she wants to keep the place a secret," said the mother. Bobbie was to keep the turkey hen in sight, but he was told that he must not let her know that he was watching. This proved to be a difficult task. As the turkey hen wandered away from the cabin, Bobbie with his old pal, Drum, followed seemingly paying no attention to her. But turkeys are wise in their ways, and for more than two hours this one went here and there and everywhere. Always, however, Bobbie was somewhere near and old Drum was with him.

At last they were a long way from the cabin and Drum was about to refuse to go any farther, for he seemed ex-

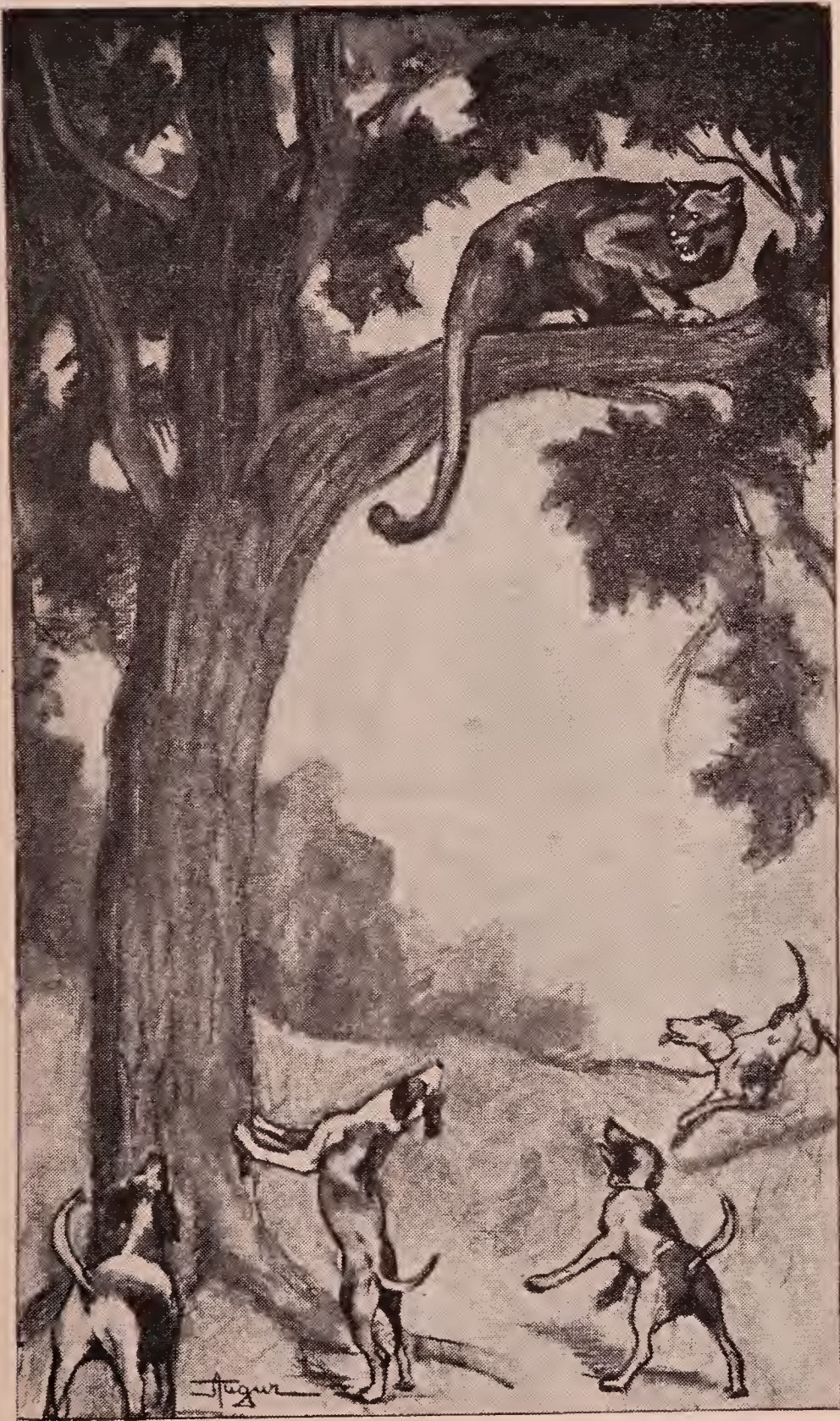
BOBBIE AND THE TURKEY'S NEST

hausted and indolent. Then as a gust of wind from the south rustled the leaves, Drum's bristles stood up; his frame seemed electrified, and going straight forward, nose in air, and muscles taut, he came near a large tree; then like an explosion rang out his deep, resonant voice, baying. From the cabin and from shady nooks about the cabin the other hounds answered. From the violent baying, even from the very tones of the hounds' voices, Bobbie knew what this meant. No such commotion would be caused unless the scent of big game had come to Drum. Since the only big game that would not run from the hounds would be a bear or a panther, and because bears were not found in trees, Bobbie knew that this must be a panther in the tree. Although he did not see the panther and did not choose to go very

BOB, THE PIONEER

near, he urged Drum and the other dogs on toward the tree.

It was not more than a minute until sounds indicated bedlam had broken loose in the forest. No doubt about it, it must be a panther. Then faint and far away Bobbie heard his father's horn. Next he heard his mother's voice calling him away from the danger. Reluctantly, he went to meet his mother who ran toward him and seizing him by the hand started toward the house. Before they got back to the cabin, Bobbie's father, riding a horse which he had unhitched from the plow, dashed up rifle in hand. Taking Bobbie with him he went toward the hounds while the mother stood and watched them. He left Bobbie to hold the horse quite a distance from the pack while he approached carefully. Searching for a sight of the panther, he crept cautiously forward and when he dis-



The Hounds Find a Panther

BOBBIE AND THE TURKEY'S NEST

covered it, he knelt down behind a tree, took deliberate aim, and fired. Down from the tree and into the pack came the wounded, angry panther. There was no more chance to shoot for the battle was on. Dogs rushed in and were bowled over or were slashed until they streamed with blood and howled with pain. However, in the end the panther was slain. Then Bobbie's father called him to see the trophy, and because Bobbie had found the panther, his father said the hide should be his.

Next morning, Bobbie was told to hunt the turkey's nest again but to be careful as, no doubt, the panther's mate might be prowling around the place and might be hungry. Bobbie wanted his sister to go with him but she said, "No, I have to help Mamma. Baby Brother is so much trouble now and I have to take care of him while Mamma churns and

BOB, THE PIONEER

does lots and lots of other things. I'm a big girl now; Mamma said so, and I have to work. You can take the dogs; they don't do anything. Make them go with you."

Therefore, on that morning Bobbie was not accompanied by Drum, but Lead and Blue were induced or rather compelled to go along. So difficult was it to keep the old hound dogs from stealing away and going back to the cabin that Bobbie was kept busy, so busy that the turkey easily stole away to her nest. Bobbie was compelled to return and report that he had lost sight of her.

The next day and the next were repetitions of the same thing. The turkey hen got away and Bobbie more and more chagrined, had to report no luck.

One morning Bobbie's father said, "Bobbie, are you going to let that old turkey hen out-smart you? Aren't you a

BOBBIE AND THE TURKEY'S NEST

hunter? Watch her carefully today, and don't worry about panthers. I don't think they will bother you. Keep your eye on the turkey."

That day Bobbie made up his mind that the turkey hen could not fool him again even if a panther did chase him. And so on that day he rushed back to the cabin in midmorning to tell his mother that the turkey's nest was only a little distance from the cabin and almost in plain sight of the cabin door. His mother went with him and sure enough under a small clump of brush was the nest in which were twelve big speckled turkey eggs.

CHAPTER III

BOBBIE'S WORK

For many days Bobbie worked near the cabin. His duties were to see that nothing disturbed the turkey's nest and also to cut weeds and to hoe in the garden.

One day the turkey hen came to the cabin bringing a brood of eleven little turkeys. Mamma taught Grace how to mix corn meal with water so that the finer particles would not blow away and with this dough to feed the little turkeys. Bobbie showed his sister how to keep the chickens and other domesticated fowls from eating the food intended for the turkeys. Then the care of the turkeys was turned over to Grace. As the garden work was all finished, it was decided that

BOBBIE'S WORK

Bobbie should go with his father to work in the cornfield.

The next morning he was very happy as he watched his mother put up the lunch and add something extra for him. At sun-up he and his father rode down the mountain side to the field. Bobbie's father began to plow the corn and Bobbie took the hoe to follow and cut the weeds that had not been uprooted or had not been covered by the plow. That day the sun grew hotter and Bobbie's enthusiasm grew cooler. Blisters came on his hands and his back ached terribly but the corn must be hoed, so he carried on. Bobbie did not know the story of Joshua but he did think that somebody or something was making the sun stand still. He was very glad when his father called him to come and get a cool drink from the spring which bubbled up near one end of the field. For a little while they

BOB, THE PIONEER

rested in the shade. When the father started back to work he said, "Bobbie, you may rest longer in the shade." But Bobbie almost openly resented the thought that he could not endure the work, for he was a big boy now and bravely went back to the hoe. He surely did not wish to appear lazy.

That night, however, as Bobbie lay in his trundle-bed, earlier than usual because he was so weary, he was rewarded for all the hardships of the day by hearing the following conversation: Mother said, "Jack, Bobbie is too little to work so hard; don't you think so?"

"Well now, Priscilla," said Father, "I worked at that age and it never hurt me. Bobbie hasn't complained. Of course, he has a few blisters on his hands. There isn't a lazy bone in his body, but he isn't going to hurt himself."

Bobbie's heartache was eased for

BOBBIE'S WORK

now he knew that really he had made good the very first day. Then the conversation turned to some other topic and the voices of his parents died in Bobbie's consciousness to a mere echo as he gradually slipped into slumberland.

Next morning Bobbie's work was not discussed. It was the regular order that Bobbie should work in the cornfield with his father day by day. Repeated discussions are not frequent among pioneers for once a matter is settled the subject is seldom brought up again.

One evening when Bobbie and his father returned from working in the field they found that the milk cows had not come home. As one of the cows wore a bell and as the bell could be heard in the woods near by, Bobbie was told to drive the cows into the barn lot while his father cared for the horse and mules.

Since Bobbie had begun working in

BOB, THE PIONEER

the field he had lost the constant companionship of Drum, for Grace required Drum to go with her when she went to care for the poultry and do errands about the place. When Bobbie went after the cows, therefore, Drum, the old hound, was not with him. The sun was setting and Bobbie felt that he must hurry. Presently he saw the cows, and grazing near by in a little grassy glade, a herd of deer. There were several pretty little spotted fawns with the does and Bobbie approached cautiously in order to get a good view of them.

He knew the deer were not afraid of the cows and he felt sure they had not seen him yet. For perhaps a minute he watched them, and then a breeze must have borne the scent of danger to the deer for all at once the whole herd except an antlered buck dashed into the forest. Only for an instant did the old



On Came the Buck—Bobbie Dodged from Tree to Tree

BOBBIE'S WORK

buck hesitate. Then turning toward Bobbie he stamped his feet and sounded his challenge—a shrill, trumpeting, whistling sound as he advanced toward the boy. Bobbie knew that the buck was in a dangerous mood. He also knew that he dare not run for that would be useless. He dare not climb a tree for if he did the angry buck would wait for hours ready to rush at him whenever he came down to the ground again. So Bobbie began to throw stones at the deer. But on came the buck seemingly feeling that he must defend his family against this enemy. Really, an antlered, angry buck is a dangerous foe even for a seasoned hunter. Bobbie knew this, and began to dodge quickly from tree to tree and continued to throw stones at the buck as he retreated to a more dense part of the forest. Again and again, the buck sounded his challenge and advanced.

BOB, THE PIONEER

Finally, Bobbie at a close range threw stones with all his might. Usually he could throw well. At last he made a fortunate throw. Squarely on the buck's nose the stone landed and into the forest dashed the buck. The fight was over now, but fearing that the buck might reconsider and return to renew the fight, Bobbie pelted the lazy cows with sticks and stones, compelling them to hurry home.

Bobbie met his father coming from the barn and told him of the attack. "Don't take chances with an angry buck, especially at this time of year. Don't forget that a deer can ruin a man quickly if he does fight and gets a chance to use his antlers," said the father.

"I didn't take much chance," said Bobbie. "I kept where the trees were so close together that the buck couldn't rush me on account of catching his antlers in

BOBBIE'S WORK

the bushes and trees. I never got out in the open so he could charge me."

"Supper's ready," called the mother and Bobbie was very hungry.

Just at that time Grace came in to say that the turkey hen and her brood could not be found. "I bet a wolf got them," she said.

Finally her father said, "No, a wolf didn't get them. If a wolf caught the hen the little turkeys would get away and come home. They have followed a flock of wild turkeys. Maybe they'll come back and maybe they won't. Bobbie and I'll keep a look out."

At last came the day when the corn was "laid by"—not to be cultivated any more. Now that the rush of work was over and a time for relaxation and recreation was at hand Bobbie was glad for that first season of cultivating crops had been strenuous indeed.

CHAPTER IV

BOBBIE'S RECREATION

It was the aroma of coffee and fried ham, the voices of his parents chatting over the breakfast table, the cooing of little brother in his crib, and the singing of birds in the trees that awakened Bobbie. He yawned luxuriously, arose from his trundle-bed and slipped into his trousers. It seemed so good to sleep until sun-up after having been accustomed to arising before daylight. Next, he went to the basin just outside the kitchen door, bathed his hands and face in cold water, hastily applied towel and comb and then seated himself on his stool at the table where ham and eggs, hot biscuits with butter and honey, and milk in abundance were before him.

BOBBIE'S RECREATION

His parents had finished their breakfast so that the boy was left to eat alone. His mother went to care for the baby and his father took down the rifle from its place above the door and proceeded to oil and clean it. Bobbie knew what that meant—still hunting for squirrels—and he also knew that he could go, for the hoeing of the corn was finished.

Grace, last of all, came to breakfast smiling and happy as usual but when she learned that Bobbie was going hunting she was not pleased for she said, "All right for you, Bobbie, but you'll have to help me get the peas and beans ready for Mamma to cook."

But Mamma said, "No, Grace, he has been working in the field and working hard. The corn is laid by and he has a right to take it easy. It is your work to help about the house."

Bobbie's broad smile at this so an-

BOB, THE PIONEER

nayed Grace that she said, "Yes, he is getting to be just like the other men folks; too important to help the women folks."

Soon Bobbie's father said, "Put on your boots, Bob, because it will be pretty rough on bare feet where we are going." Bobbie was glad his father had called him Bob. It sounded to him more grown up. It seemed that the boots had grown smaller and the feet had grown larger, and besides a sore toe here and a stone bruise there added to the difficulties so much that the boots could not be worn. But booted or barefooted, snakes, briars, stones, or what-not, Bobbie intended to go hunting, and he went.

Out into the forest they walked silently. After a long time they sat down on a log to wait for the squirrels to come out of their hiding places to play. By and by two half-grown squirrels began play-

BOBBIE'S RECREATION

ing in the tree-tops, chasing each other. Finally, one of them stayed still for a moment and up came the rifle. Bobbie thought his father would never shoot but at last the gun spoke, the squirrel fell from the tree and Bobbie had it in his hands almost at once. Examining it carefully he said, "Barked, all right." (To "bark" a squirrel means to shoot into the bark of the tree under the squirrel so that the concussion would kill the squirrel but the squirrel's body would not be torn by the bullet.)

"Uh-huh," said the father, "but we'll have to move our stand for the squirrels can smell burnt powder a long distance."

After going farther down toward the creek they stopped and were seated side by side on a ledge of stone. All was quiet now save the drumming of a woodpecker on a dead tree down by the creek

BOB, THE PIONEER

and the half sleepy songs of birds here and there. All at once, "Thief! Thief! Thief!" cried the jaybirds as they darted excitedly in and out among the boughs of a giant oak tree. Bobbie finally discovered the cause of the commotion—a great horned owl. He had settled here for his daytime sleep but now that he had been discovered and such a "hullabaloo" had been raised because he was seated in front of his own door, the wise old owl quietly withdrew into the depths of a great hole in a dead branch nearly at the top of the giant old tree. The noisy jaybirds at last became silent.

By midmorning Bobbie was carrying four young squirrels. As he and his father moved toward a new location he said, "Let me shoot the next one." Without a word the rifle was placed in his hands. His father took the squirrels to carry them and motioned for Bobbie to

BOBBIE'S RECREATION

go ahead. So Bobbie led the way quietly through the forest. He scanned the trees carefully for squirrel's nests and when he thought a suitable place was found the two hunters were again seated. They did not have a long wait here either. Soon Bobbie had the gun sights trained on a young squirrel, squeezed the trigger and the squirrel fell. Picking it up his father said, "Barked! Well we'd better go home. This will make a good mess of squirrels like your mamma wants. Next week we are going to visit at your Grandfather Brown's."

When they returned to the cabin Bobbie hurried into the garden to tell Grace that they were going to grandfather's the next week but she said, "I know it. Mamma told me. Here, you carry the peas and I'll carry the beans. I have already picked them." The remainder of

BOB, THE PIONEER

that day was spent in preparation for a visit to Grandfather Brown's house.

Thus, Bobbie's playtime came as mere rest between hard tasks. During the late summer there were many days when they did not work all day, but few days when they did not work at least part of the time. Aside from going hunting or fishing with his father or going to visit their relatives with the family, Bobbie had little time for play. Yet he was satisfied with his lot.

So the daily course of Bobbie's life moved along. In autumn there were night hunts for big game and Bobbie always went. Sometimes when there was not a great rush of work, the rifle was taken down and Bobbie and his father went to a place where salt was deposited so that the deer would find it and get accustomed to coming to the spot frequently to lick the salt. Such a place was

BOBBIE'S RECREATION

called a deer lick. The hunters would hide near this lick and wait for the deer to come. Here the hunters went to get venison. At other times they concealed themselves in the woods and with a bone turkey call they called up the wild turkeys and shot them also for food.

Whenever these two hunters brought home wild turkeys Grace examined the game to see if by chance any of them were of the brood that had run away from her. Once she was almost sure that one of the dead turkeys was of that lost flock and calling Bobbie she said, "This is one of my turkeys. You have killed my turkey. Why did you kill the poor thing? Perhaps it was coming back home. You said you killed one turkey. Of course you could kill a tame turkey."

But Bobbie said, "That is not the one I killed. Dad killed that one and it was as wild as any of the others. Besides,

BOB, THE PIONEER

if you wanted so much to keep your turkeys why did you let them get away from you?"

"Now, children," said the mother, "don't quarrel about it. If this was our turkey when it was little we are fortunate to get it now for I've never known turkeys to come back home after they grew up with the wild ones."

CHAPTER V

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO GRANDFATHER BROWN'S HOME

One morning Bobbie and his family arose very early for the journey to grandfather's was to be made that day. By the time the sun had peeped over the eastern mountain tops every member of the family was ready to start. Bobbie put the big bearskin robe and the panther skin robe into the wagon to show to his grandparents. When the several members of the family were all seated in the wagon, the master blew his horn and all the hounds assembled and followed the wagon as it wound slowly up the mountain road.

It was a gladsome morning. Everyone was happy. Grace sang softly to her-

BOB, THE PIONEER

self as they rode along and Bobbie occasionally whistled his favorite tune or called to some of the hounds as they scampered along the road. At such times, Grace chided Bobbie for interfering with her song but the children did not really quarrel.

Hours and hours went by as the sturdy team pulled the wagon on and on up the winding mountain road. When the last climb was made the family stopped to eat lunch and to allow the mules to eat and to rest. Bobbie and Grace were thrilled with the beauty of the far away valleys and the tumbling mountain range that was visible in the distance.

About mid-afternoon Bobbie's parents pointed out to the children a winding road that could be seen for some distance along the river valley but became lost to view as it led up another smaller valley. That was the road to the home

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

of their grandparents where the family hoped to arrive by night fall.

Then down and around and down again went the wagon to the river brink. Grace was really afraid and said so to Bobbie as they drove into the river. However, with perhaps more expressed confidence than he felt, Bobbie assured his sister that there was not the least bit of danger. This, it seemed, proved to be true for the wagon and team passed safely through the water and then waited on the opposite bank for the hounds to swim across the river. Some of the dogs drifted far down stream before they could land but finally they were all safely over.

Then steadily, as the shadows lengthened, the mules drew the wagon up a beautiful, rugged valley and finally crossed over a high ridge of land from where the family looked down into a green valley filled with the last golden

BOB, THE PIONEER

rays of the setting sun. There was Grandfather Brown's home—the great barns, the slaves' quarters, the old mansion—a typical southern plantation. At twilight the journey ended at the door of the old home. In the living room the grandmother sat in her great arm chair. Her needlework was laid away and with smiles and laughter she greeted the whole family. To a slave boy she said, "Go tell old Joe to blow his master's call."

The sound of a familiar horn awakened echoes along the whole valley and very soon thereafter the slave boy called, "Yonder comes Massa on Prince." And sure enough, mounted on his favorite saddle horse, grandfather came rapidly up the lane from the lower part of the plantation.

When he entered the living room Grace and baby brother were lifted up in

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

his arms and Bobbie was drawn to his side. Thus, in the living room, the family circle was complete. The children were happy but very tired and soon after the evening meal they were tucked away in bed.

The next morning after breakfast the children went out on the lawn to play but there were so many things to see and so many places to go that not much time could be found for play. Down through the orchard went the children and soon Grace called, "Oh! Bobbie, see the little playhouse where the brook starts!"

"That's the spring house," said Bobbie, "come and see how the milk and butter are kept cool and fresh."

"Why don't we have a spring house, Bobbie?" said Grace.

"I don't know," said Bobbie, "but I think I'll build one when we get back home." As soon as Grace had counted all

BOB, THE PIONEER

the crocks and pans Bobbie carefully closed the door.

Again they started to play but a commotion in the barn lot drew the children there quickly. There they saw a Negro man marking pigs by cutting their ears. He said, "Yes, little master, we have to mark 'em before we turn them out in the woods. If we didn't mark 'em the little rascals grow so fast that next fall when we bring 'em in we couldn't tell whose hogs they were. They grow up out in the woods. Pigs from other men's plantations grow up out there too and if each family did not mark the pigs, nobody could know his own hogs."

But Grace said it was cruel and mean and Bobbie could not get her to understand it as he did. "Why," said he, "Daddy marks our pigs that way and ladies punch holes in their ears just to

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

wear earbobs." But still Grace said that it hurt the pigs, it made their ears bleed, and was not right.

In returning to their play the children met their mother and grandmother and with them went to where a Negro woman was carding wool while in another place a spinning wheel hummed busily. In still another place an aged Negress sat at a loom skillfully thrusting the shuttle back and forth and pounding the threads into cloth with steady strokes.

Their grandfather had told the children that he had a surprise for them but he and their father had gone away from the house before the children arose that day. All morning, as they played, Bobbie and Grace wondered where the two men were and what their grandfather had for them. In their playing they ran here, there, and everywhere, and after a few

BOB, THE PIONEER

hours they were really very tired. At last they sat down in the shade of a great oak to rest. Almost as soon as they were seated they saw their father and grandfather riding toward the house and leading a beautiful spotted pony. By the side of the pony was a wee, wee colt. Oh, but the children were delighted! Bobbie's father and grandfather told them they could not take the little colt home with them this time for it was very young—too young to go on the road. However, their grandfather said that when the colt was a year old they might take it home with them for their very own. This was the surprise.

Bobbie rode the pony a little way and then Grace rode her; and so they took turn and turn about riding Spot (that was the pony's name) on the lawn. Everywhere the pony went the little colt went too. Because the colt was so young

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

the children could not ride far on its mother.

At evening Bobbie and Grace took Spot and her tiny colt down to the old apple orchard. They were to leave them there for the night so that Spot might eat grass and the colt might lie down and rest. For a long time Grace would not go back to the house but stood by the little colt. At last Bobbie said, "Come on, don't you see the sun is down? It will soon be dark, and anyway I'm hungry."

Then again Grace patted the colt and finally at a distance she followed Bobbie. As they passed on toward the house Grace saw something entirely new to her and very, very strange. Was it a big flower? No, it moved and when she called out to Bobbie to come and see it, a loud noise came from the great pretty fan-like object. Then the thing turned around and she recognized that it was

BOB, THE PIONEER

a bird. The old black man, Joe, explained that this was a peacock and he said, "They always squall that way at evening and they strut and strut whenever they feel big."

That night it rained and the next morning their grandfather sent a Negro slave to the fish trap and Bobbie was permitted to go. Grace wanted to go too but her mother said, "No, it's too far and too rough going for a little girl. You stay and play with Spot and the colt."

It seemed a long, long muddy road to Bobbie and the rush of water under them as they walked over the dam at the fish trap was so rapid and the wet stones were so slick that Bobbie at last consented to let good old Joe lead him. What a great pile of wriggling fish they found! Old Joe had a large bag and soon it was almost full of fish. Bobbie could not even lift the catch. "Joe," said Bobbie, "how

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

does this thing get full of fish?" Patiently Old Joe tried to explain. "See dat water pouring over here? Dat's a fall board. See how fast de water is running to it? Well, Mr. Fish goes out to swim and before he knows it he gets in the swift water and flop, over he goes into the trap. Look! Look! Bobbie, here comes one now. See that? He can't get out! He's a fine one too. That's a good fish trap, you bet."

When they were ready to go home Old Joe first led Bobbie ashore and then returning brought the great bag of fish. "Yes sir, little master," said Old Joe, "we got fish for everybody and more and more coming down into the trap. It'll be full again by night."

Half way home they heard hounds in full cry and rushing up to the top of a hill they were able to see the chase passing up the valley not far away. Not

BOB, THE PIONEER

more than one hundred yards in front of the pack ran a great timber wolf with his long, red tongue hanging far out as he strained forward in a flight for his life. Out in the front of the pack Bobbie's hound, Old Lead, true to his name, led the chase. Next to him was a huge black-and-tan hound of grandfather's, and next was Drum whose booming voice made more noise than any of the other hounds. Fully twenty hounds were in that chase and the noise was almost deafening but Old Joe raised his voice and yelled at the big spotted hound. "Go on, Spot! Get that wolf, boy! What you doing, letting that hound lead you?" Bobbie also yelled at the top of his voice. "Go on, Lead! Catch that wolf! Go on Blue! Catch him and kill him, Drum!" The mad chase swept on up the valley.

By and by, the noise of the chase suddenly ceased. The kill was made. Old

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

Joe and Bobbie hurried on to the house. The hounds soon returned and old Drum as usual had been in the battle for he had two fresh wounds where the wolf's fangs had sliced his neck and shoulder.

Bobbie, when at last he was alone with his grandfather said, "I think old Drum was the one that killed that wolf. Drum won't stop for anything when a fight is on."

"But," said the old man, "Joe said one of your dogs was leading all of them even ahead of my best hound, old Spot."

"Yes sir," said the boy, "I saw it too. That was Lead. He is the fastest runner but when the wolf stopped to fight and the other hounds got ready to fight, I know old Drum rushed right in. I saw him fight a big bear once and a wounded panther another time, and he never stopped for anything. Old Drum

BOB, THE PIONEER

is the best fighter. That's why he always gets hurt."

"Well, I suppose you are right. Some hounds have wonderful courage," said the old man.

Then horses were brought and Bobbie went with his father and grandfather to find the dead wolf. On the trip Bobbie did most of the talking for he wanted his grandfather to know all about his three old pals, Lead, Drum and Blue.

The dead wolf lying near the foot of a high cliff told the mute story of the kill. As they rode home the grandfather said, "If that wolf could have kept ahead of the hounds for a quarter of a mile further he would have been safe for there are many caves in that place. No doubt he tried to reach his den."

No one seemed to know how the chase had started but the master said he thought some of the Negroes had taken

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

the pack out very early in the morning, long before the family arose. For all knew there had been a long, long chase. Big timber wolves are hard to run down by hounds, however good the dogs may be. "But," said the master, "it is all right and they know I don't care."

At the table Bobbie asked his father why they did not have a home like grandfather's with great broad fields and meadows. "We are thinking of going to such a place, son," said he. "Your mamma and I have been talking about it. But it is a long, long way from here."

The next morning Bobbie and his family started back home very early in the morning and just at night came to their own little mountain home.

CHAPTER VI

BOBBIE'S LONG JOURNEY THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY AND FAR WEST

During the days that Bobbie and the family visited his mother's old home the talk of going West began and this talk was repeated at times through the summer and fall. As the talk continued the desire to go West became stronger in Bobbie's family.

When Bobbie's other grandfather, Mr. Wright, died and the family stayed for several days in his father's old home the decision was finally made to go West. Soon Bobbie's father sold the home place and all he had from his father's estate except two Negro slaves, Ben and Kate. These slaves were to remain at the old homestead until Bobbie's father should

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

need them. Then they were to go with their new master to the new land in the West.

In April two covered wagons drawn by mule teams were driven down the mountain side from Bobbie's home. In the front wagon were Bobbie's father and mother, Grace and little brother. Back of them, driving the next team hitched to another covered wagon, were Ben, Kate and their little baby boy, named Dink; next came the cows and after them came Bobbie on the old black saddle horse, Dick. Trotting by Bobbie's side or ambling through the woods at will were his three lazy old pals, Drum, Lead and Blue.

At the end of the first day's journey the family spent the night at the home of one of Bobbie's uncles. The next morning after saying goodbye to these kin-folk the little caravan moved on into

BOB, THE PIONEER

strange country. Slowly the wagons rolled along westward, patiently the cows followed, sometimes far behind but never so far that the cow bell could not be heard by the family. Behind the cows came Bobbie, riding old Dick and whistling or singing as fancy dictated. Sometimes when tired of the saddle he walked along the road to play with his pals while the horse followed the cows.

That night camp was made in a little grove by a spring. It was jolly around the camp fire but when the work was all done and the group sat down to rest they all felt lonely in the deep forest. The sound of night life to which, of course, they had all been more or less accustomed in their secluded home, seemed more distinct than ever before. The hooting of the owls was louder, the howling of a lone wolf more weird. When the hounds bayed it seemed that the sound

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

of their voices was terrific. Even the little frogs croaked louder and the crickets in the grass chirped more noisily.

At last quiet settled over the camp, the Negro slaves in one wagon, and the master and his family in the other. Bobbie was on a little cot beneath the wagon in which the family slept, while Drum, Lead, and Blue slept as close to Bobbie's cot as they could get. The horses and cows grazed contentedly about the camp. Bobbie was tired, but the stars were so bright, the shadows of the trees made by the flickering firelight were so fantastic and the situation so exposed that he remained wide awake. So many things disturbed him that it was a long, long time before he was sound asleep.

Just when he was sound asleep (so it seemed to him) something disturbed Bobbie again and he opened his eyes. It was daylight. The camp fire was burning;

BOB, THE PIONEER

Kate was cooking breakfast; Ben was milking the cows; while Bobbie's father was feeding the horse and mules and his mother was nursing the baby.

Soon the travelers had finished breakfast and were ready to start on another day's journey. Hour by hour down the valley rolled the wagons and behind them came the cows and last of all Bobbie. When the noonday camp was made, Grace asked to be allowed to ride the horse sometimes. To this Bobbie and his parents agreed and thereafter Grace waited for Bobbie by the roadside when she had tired of the wagon. At such times the two children would have a good visit. Sometimes both of them would ride the horse and at other times Grace would ride alone while Bobbie walked. Finally the visiting would be closed by Grace's return to the wagon. However, Bobbie was never relieved of his task of driving

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

the cows, and he never had any thought of quitting his work until it was finished.

On such occasions Grace often said, "I wish I had that colt Grandfather is going to let us have; but of course it is not a year old yet." But Bobbie would reply, "Well, even if we had the colt and it were a year old, we couldn't ride it. It couldn't even follow the other horses on this long journey. When we get way out West I'll get you a pretty spotted pony from the Indians."

For days the travelers had followed a valley down which a little stream flowed. This stream, as they followed it almost from its source, grew day by day until it was almost a river. Frequently they had to cross the stream where there was no bridge. They came one evening to a ford and decided to camp for the night before crossing. All night it rained. It also rained the next day, a driving rain,

BOB, THE PIONEER

with gusts of wind. Here the westward movement was halted because fording the stream was impossible. There was nothing to do but wait for the waters to recede. About midmorning on the third day of this forced encampment the sun came out. Bobbie's father brought out the rifle and the boy thought they were going to hunt squirrels.

Quietly they started through the woods and in a little while selected a fallen tree and sat down on its trunk to wait as Bobbie thought for the game to come out to play. Within a very few minutes Bobbie's father very cautiously and quickly slipped down behind the trunk of the fallen tree. Bobbie, without waiting to know why he did so, followed his father's example. When the rifle was cautiously thrust across the log Bobbie found the direction and there not very far distant were several deer. Their curi-

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

osity had led them toward the camp. There was only a second to wait and then Bobbie's father pressed the trigger. A buck fifty or sixty yards distant leaped into the air and all the herd ran away through the woods. In a little while this particular buck began lagging behind the others and soon he ceased to run, staggered, and fell. Then the Negro, Ben, was called and after preparing the venison he carried it to the camp. As the three approached camp Ben said, "Master Jack, I haven't ever had much of this kind of meat."

"Ben," said the master, "you may have all of the venison you want this time. It is summer and we can't keep the meat. Eat all you want. But as soon as we get to camp take the tallow or fat from the deer and grease our harness. After all this rain the leather will need greasing."

BOB, THE PIONEER

“Yes sir,” said the Negro. “I’ll put the harness on that big log in the sun and I’ll grease them.”

Once at camp Ben went to work to grease the harness and as he worked he sang:

“I eat when I’m hungry,
I drink when I’m dry,
And if a tree don’t fall on me,
I’ll live ’til I die.”

Over and over again all through the morning hours Ben sang at his work bareheaded in the hot sunshine while his mate, Kate, was busy about the camp until the noonday meal was ready. When they had eaten, Bobbie and his father started toward a cabin which they had seen far up in the hills. When they came to the cabin it seemed very quiet. “Perhaps no one lives there,” said Bobbie. They had seen smoke arising from the

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

chimney of that cabin earlier in the day and for that reason they thought that surely somebody must live in it. When they came to the door and knocked, a voice called to them to come in. They entered and saw an aged man lying on a crude bunk by the wall. Slowly the aged one arose to a sitting position and said, "Stranger, take the chair; young'n sit here on the bunk by me. My name is Jim Withers. I'm the only man living in this neighborhood since Pap died fifteen years ago. Be you just passing through and held up by the rain?"

"My name is Jack Wright," said Bobbie's father. "We were just passing through to western Missouri and were held by the high waters."

"I saw your smoke by the ford," said the old man, "and I thought of going down and passing the time of day with you, but I haven't felt well lately.

BOB, THE PIONEER

After the rain today I started down but played out before I got half way to you." The old man again reclined in his bunk and seemed completely exhausted.

"I shot a buck this morning and thought you might like to have some venison," said Mr. Wright.

"Yes," said the old man, "but neighbor I'm afraid I can't come for it."

"I'll send my Negro, Ben, over with it then, and if you need anything else I'll be glad to send that too," said the visitor.

"If you could spare a little coffee and a mite of whiskey I'd like it. I think I need some stimulant. I think I nearly passed out today after my walk," said the old man. Then he rested awhile and said, "I'm sorry you don't want to settle here in these hills; I wouldn't live anywhere else. I've never lived in any house but this. My Pap and Ma and my wife

BOBBIE'S JOURNEY

are all buried under that pine tree that stands just below the spring. I hoped some one would bury me there some time but maybe if I know just when the end is coming I can lay my own bones down by their graves and that will do."

Bobbie and his father said goodbye and hurried back toward camp. As soon as they were out of hearing Bobbie wanted to know what was the matter with the man. His father said, "He seems to be dying from loneliness, grief and starvation but we'll soon fix him up."

It was nearly sundown when they reached the camp and Ben was still singing but he had changed his song to "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane." Bobbie's father listened to Ben and then said, "Well, people do get attached to their old homes, I suppose, but we are going to make a new home; something better than a cabin in the woods or a cabin in the

BOB, THE PIONEER

lane. We can never improve our conditions unless we try and Bob, you and I are going to make a real try for a better situation in life."

Ben was called and given a pack of venison, bacon, coffee, flour and also the bottle of whiskey, and some quinine from the medicine box. These he was to take to the old man's cabin. Ben was told not to receive any pay in case it was offered but to leave the pack and come back to camp.

CHAPTER VII

BOBBIE'S LONG JOURNEY (Continued) MEETING DIFFICULT DUTIES

Soon after Ben left for the old man's cabin, Kate called the family to supper. As they ate Bobbie and his father told the others of the old man's sad condition and the hope that they could restore him. "For," said Mr. Wright, "it is too bad to leave a sick old man here in the woods without any neighbors or any chance of having a doctor with him. It is our duty to do what we can."

Kate and Ben always ate apart from the master's table, of course, and after the white folks finished eating, Kate was busy clearing away the dishes of her master's table and arranging the food for Ben and for herself. When Ben

BOB, THE PIONEER

returned, he hurriedly called Mr. Wright aside and said to him in awed tones, "Master Jack, the old man's dead."

"How do you know?" said Mr. Wright.

"I went into the cabin and I saw him and it scared me so that I ran all the way back here," said Ben.

"Well, Ben," said his master, "eat your supper and then you and Bobbie and I will go back to the cabin and bury the old man. It's our duty."

Ben did not want much to eat for he was so upset that he could not enjoy his victuals. It was not long until the three left for the cabin once more; this time Ben carried a hammer, some nails and a spade. Bobbie's father carried a small Bible, a saw, a candle, some writing paper, a goose quill pen, and a bottle of ink.

Sure enough the old man was dead.

MEETING DIFFICULT DUTIES

The cabin was built out of hewn pine logs. Even the window casings, window sills, the door and the table were made from boards hewn out of logs. There was not a piece of sawed lumber in or about the house. Mr. Wright noticed this when he began to look for lumber with which to make a coffin. It was finally decided to lay the bunk in the bottom of the grave, place the old man on it and then place the door and the table top over him for a cover.

It was far into the night before the grave was ready and then Ben could not be induced to help carry the body. Therefore, the master bore the body to the grave. While Bobbie held the candle for him he read the first few verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew (a portion of the Beatitudes). After that he said, "Ben you can sing the Doxology and I will help you."

BOB, THE PIONEER

"But, Master Jack," said the slave, "is it right for a Negro to sing at white folk's funeral?"

"Of course," said Mr. Wright. "Go on and I will help you." Ben began to sing, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow." His master's deep rich voice joined him but Bobbie could only hum. He did not have the courage even to form words. Then in the moonlight the master lowered the body into the grave. Master and servant filled the grave with earth and going back into the cabin Mr. Wright wrote as follows:

"Jim Withers, age about 80, died this date, April 28, 1827, and was buried by me, Jack Wright, of Hawkins County, Tennessee, now enroute to western Missouri."

This note was fastened on the wall beside the doorway. Then Bobbie's father said, "That's all we can do for him now."

MEETING DIFFICULT DUTIES

Ben, you get the pack you brought. I'll take the saw, spade, and hammer; also the pen and ink, and Bobbie will carry the Bible."

Silently they started back toward the camp but Ben was in front. Nothing would induce him to linger near the grave or to get far from his master now. Like many primitive men he greatly feared the dead.

About midnight they reached camp and in silence went to bed. But far into the night Ben's subdued voice was to be heard as he told Kate what an awful ordeal they had been through. Finally he said, "But Kate, he is a good, brave man and I'm glad we belong to him. I know he will never neglect us or let us suffer."

"Thank the good Lord," said Kate and then deep silence reigned.

The next morning was bright and sunny but the swollen stream still ap-

BOB, THE PIONEER

peared too deep to ford. However, the water was falling. After breakfast was over the master said, "We have been on our journey two weeks and I think it is at least a hundred miles from here to Nashville. We must prepare to move on."

At midmorning Bobbie's father called Ben and said, "Bring the saddle horse here. I'm going to cross over and test the ford."

When Ben brought the horse he said, "Master Jack, let me cross the ford. You all needn't go into the water. I may be afraid of a dead man but I've no fear of Old Man River."

"Can you swim, Ben? If you can't swim, I won't let you go," said the master.

"Yes, sir, Master Jack. I'm a good swimmer," said the slave. Then he mounted and rode into the stream, soothing the horse and saying, "Go on, good nigger horse, Ben won't let you drown."

MEETING DIFFICULT DUTIES

That's it, slow and careful." The black horse and his no less black rider crossed over and back again safely but the master decided to wait until afternoon as he feared the water was so deep that it would come into the wagon boxes and damage the loads.

Early in the afternoon the travelers crossed the stream and moved on westward. But again bad luck awaited them for soon after sunset as the camp was beginning to become quiet for the evening rest the hounds dashed out into the timber after a wolf and one of the cows hastily stepping aside to let the dogs go by was bitten on the leg by a rattlesnake. Ben saw it and seizing a club dashed upon the offending snake and killed it. The cow would be lame at least; or perhaps she would die. In any event, it appeared that there would be another delay.

So night came again. The wolf ran

BOB, THE PIONEER

into a den in the cliff and the hounds returned. Once more the camp was silent as the blaze of the campfire flickered and went out leaving only coals glowing in the dark.

CHAPTER VIII

BOBBIE'S LONG JOURNEY (Continued) NEW EXPERIENCES

The following morning was bright and clear, but what to do? The cow was not dead but she was lame, of course, and therefore the Wrights could not travel far. But there had been so many delays that the travelers were anxious to make more progress toward their new home. After breakfast while they were still undecided, a man rode up from the west to their camp.

“Good morning, stranger,” he said. “I saw your smoke last night and this morning and came over to be neighborly.” After introducing himself and learning who they were he said, “By the way, there is an old man living some eight or

BOB, THE PIONEER

ten miles back near this road. I am wondering if you saw him?" When he was told of the condition in which the old man was found and of his death and burial he said, "Well, it is too bad but he has been unhappy for many years and there was nothing that anyone could do for him except to see that he had food and was kept alive." Then he invited the travelers to his home which was only two and a half miles distant. It was decided, therefore, to drive to his home and visit while Bobbie brought the cows.

Once more the travelers moved on. Bobbie and the cows went very very slowly. It was noon when Bobbie arrived with the cows and he and his family ate the noon meal in the home of the farmer.

Here the travelers learned that they were now out of the mountain region and into a fertile area where the coun-

NEW EXPERIENCES

try was more thickly settled so that they would frequently pass many plantations. Bobbie was glad when his father asked the farmer to keep the crippled cow and he agreed to do so. Early in the afternoon the travelers resumed their journey. The lame cow being left behind, the travelers went a long distance that afternoon.

It would be impossible to record the incidents in every camp, the kindness shown and the good will offered by the country people whose homes Bobbie passed. Every day the tasks were the same. Day by day Bobbie drove the cows; sometime during the day Grace came to visit him. New faces were seen, and varied incidents together with new experiences along the way kept everybody interested and made the journey more enjoyable.

At last they came to Nashville—

BOB, THE PIONEER

not, of course, the Nashville of today—but to Bobbie a most wonderful place. Several hundred people lived there and there was the very house in which the Legislature met to make the state laws. By the town flowed the Cumberland River, the largest stream of water Bobbie had ever seen. Bobbie and Grace wondered if Ben would be afraid of this great river. When they asked him he was not so sure.

For three days they stayed in Nashville and made careful inquiries about the new land to which they were going. They learned that Missouri was now a state and no longer a territory and also that the Osage Indians had moved farther west. Bobbie was disappointed by this news for he had hoped to see these Indians. They also learned that Missouri was rapidly being settled. When they had found out all they could about the re-

NEW EXPERIENCES

maining portion of their journey and the horse and mules and the cows were rested, they started on again. Following the course of the Cumberland River they intended to go across Kentucky and Southern Illinois to St. Louis which was near the journey's end. It was a journey of about three weeks from Nashville to St. Louis.

One afternoon the cows seemed very lazy and in time Bobbie knew that he was far behind the wagons but the cows would not hurry. Then a black cloud came up rapidly from the southwest and almost before the boy realized it the storm broke. At that time Bobbie was in a dense forest through which the road led. Lightning almost blinded him and the roar of the wind was dreadful. Then the cows became frightened and ran away through the tangled jungle of trees and bushes. Bobbie urged Dick forward as

BOB, THE PIONEER

fast as he could but going through the jungle was difficult. Once a bright flash of lightning blinded Bobbie for a moment and faithful old Dick stumbled and fell to his knees but he arose again trembling. Bobbie thought the horse had been struck by the lightning but it was only the shock from a bolt of lightning which had shattered a large tree near by.

“Go on, nigger horse,” said Bobbie as he patted Dick’s neck and then he discovered that he himself was almost as nervous as the horse. Where were the cows? How dark it was. The storm redoubled its fury. A large tree crashed to the earth across the path that Bobbie was following and Dick stopped suddenly, trembling more than ever. Now the horse was thoroughly frightened.

“Whoa! Dick,” said Bobbie, “we are both getting scared. Whoa! now!” and

NEW EXPERIENCES

good faithful old Dick stood still and tried not to tremble.

Branches of trees were falling here and there. Frequently a loud crash told that a giant forest tree had been broken down. Bobbie, thinking that he heard the cow bell, pulled Dick to one side and started again when a limb falling from a tree struck the horse, making him plunge forward frantically. Gradually Bobbie got him under control again and then a large limb torn from a tree struck the boy and unseated him. Whether he was unconscious for a second, a minute, or ten minutes is not known but at last he realized that he was on the ground, lying in mud and water and that it was hailing. But good old Dick, head down and shivering, stood waiting for him. When Bobbie arose and tried to climb upon Dick's back he discovered that his right arm was injured for he could not

BOB, THE PIONEER

use his right hand. He also realized that he was shivering. Whether his shivering was from pain, fright, or cold, he could not tell but at any rate he determined to go on after the cows. Leading Dick up to the trunk of a fallen tree he was able to mount.

Again seated on Dick he started through the jungle and then he really heard the bell and soon found the cows. They were standing under a large overhanging bluff. Here out of the storm Bobbie rested for awhile and examined his arm to find that it was beginning to swell rapidly, and he thought it was broken. However, in a few minutes the worst of the storm was over and Bobbie forced the cows into the open and began to search for the road which he at last found.

No sooner had the storm ceased than Bobbie's father and Ben, the slave,

NEW EXPERIENCES

started out to search for the boy. They were not far from the bluff under which the cows had taken refuge. When Bobbie started the cows on again, the men could hear the bell and very soon they found him. Bobbie's face had been lashed by the branches of the trees during the storm. He thought his arm was broken and knew he was badly battered but he could not have known the impression he made when he met his father and the slave. He was pale from suffering and his face was smeared with blood from the scratches of the bushes.

"Are you hurt?" said his father.

"Not much," said Bobbie. "Maybe my arm is broken, I don't know. My teeth won't stop chattering."

Soon they came to camp and Bobbie's mother said, "Why didn't you let the old cows go?"

"No," said Bobbie, "I started to

BOB, THE PIONEER

drive the cows to Missouri and I am going to get them there."

Carefully Bobbie's father examined the arm and found that it was not broken. Dry clothing made Bobbie feel much better so that his teeth ceased to chatter and food improved his condition even more. At the suggestion of his father Bobbie's mother prepared a sling for the arm. When the arm was carefully bandaged and was at last in the sling the father said, "This arm is going to be almost useless for a little while. You can take the arm out of the sling when you want to do so but I don't think you will use that arm much for a week or two. The bone may be fractured but it is not broken and your arm will be as good as new in a short time."

The red sunset had painted the green forest in brilliant colors and supper was over before Grace had a chance

NEW EXPERIENCES

to be alone with Bobbie. Then she had him tell her all about his experience in the storm. "Oh, but it was awful, wasn't it Bobbie? But you were brave, Bobbie," she said.

But Bobbie replied, "Oh, shut up, Grace. Do you think I'd quit my task until I'd finished it? No, siree, I'm driving the cows to Missouri Territory."

"Missouri State," corrected Grace.

"Well, to our new home," answered Bobbie, "wherever it is."

Just then Dink, Kate's little pickanniny, became so loud in his crying that the Negro slave hurried to him and Bobbie's mamma followed to see what could be the trouble for Dink had never cried so loudly before. When Kate was questioned by her mistress she said, "I declare, Missus, I was so flustrated; first the storm scared me so and Master Bobbie was so hurt, I plumb forgot to give

BOB, THE PIONEER

this child his supper. But he'll be all right pretty soon. I'm going to give him his supper now."

Then in her strong arms she held the child to her breast and little Dink became quiet. The cattle and the horses grazed contentedly; the sun faded; the camp fire died down to a dull glow; the travelers sought their beds and one by one fell asleep.

CHAPTER IX

BOBBIE'S LONG JOURNEY (Continued) ALONG THE OPEN ROAD

While Bobbie had the crippled arm everyone tried to ease his burden as much as possible. Ben bridled and saddled old Dick for him each morning and did whatever he could to help the boy. Grace offered to drive the cows but met with stern objections from Bobbie.

"I'll do the driving. I started out to drive the cows and I'll finish. It's my job," said Bobbie. There seemed to be no way to relieve Bobbie and he did not wish to be relieved. He resented every offer which seemed to imply he was not able to do his task.

During these days he must have suffered much. Always the travelers could

BOB, THE PIONEER

hear the cow bells tinkling behind the wagons but Bobbie's merry singing and whistling they did not hear for many days. Faithful little Grace prolonged her visits each day and this was all she could do.

One day they drove by a cabin and a mongrel dog ran out and barked furiously. Finally it snapped at one of the mules but ran away when Mr. Wright scolded. The man whose house it was sat in a chair in the shade of a tree by the cabin. He did not seem friendly. When just beyond the cabin, Ben stopped his team and was busy rearranging some part of his load. Whether the native instinct of the slave told him this was not a good man, no one knows. Maybe he really stopped because the load needed attention. It is reasonable to believe, however, that he feared for his little

ALONG THE OPEN ROAD

master's safety when he should come to pass this cabin.

At any rate he was there when Bobbie and the cows came by and the dog ran out to bite the cows and to bark at Bobbie's horse. Perhaps Bobbie was not in a very good humor. Perhaps his arm was hurting him more than usual. It may have been that he did not like the looks of this dog. At any rate he called on his three pals, Drum, Lead, and Blue and they chased the dog into the yard and in following it they knocked down the chair in which the man was sitting. Then things began to happen. The names this man called Bobbie would not do to put in print. Ben, hearing the abuse heaped upon Bobbie, ran back to the defense of the boy. This seemed to make the man more angry. The idea of a Negro slave confronting him was too much and he began threats to kill. Ben tried to reason

BOB, THE PIONEER

with him and urged Bobbie to go on. But Bobbie would not go. No doubt he was afraid of the man but in some way he felt he was not going to run. The man dashed into the house and came out with a gun in his hand. How it happened that Mr. Wright knew of the trouble no one knows but in the height of the excitement he suddenly appeared upon the scene. He must have heard much that had been said but he did not enter into any argument. Swiftly he approached the man, knocked him down, and took his gun away from him. He broke the gun over the gate post and threw the pieces back into the yard. Then he told the Negro slave and the boy to go on. Bobbie instantly obeyed his father and Ben his master, but they both looked back to see what else would happen. The man's wife came out screaming that her man was killed but her mate disproved that

ALONG THE OPEN ROAD

assertion by rising to his feet. However, his anger seemed to be gone. What else happened Ben and Bobbie never knew. At any rate Bobbie's father came on presently, resumed his seat in the wagon and the caravan moved forward.

The next day Bobbie mentioned to his mother the affair but she only said, "Don't question your father, Bobbie. I can't tell you anything and of course he won't, but perhaps the man deserved what he got."

"But," said Bobbie, "I thought for awhile the man was dead. What if he had been killed?"

"Don't talk about it, son," she said.

"Well," said Bobbie, "I think I'll not sick my hounds on another dog even if he does nip the cows. It's apt to cause too much trouble. I never saw Daddy look as he did when he came up to that man."

BOB, THE PIONEER

Ben told Kate all about the trouble with comments of his own added. "I was afraid he would kill me and I couldn't get little Bobbie to go on so I could run. I know that a Negro should never strike a white man but I would not let that man touch my little master, especially when he had one arm in a sling. But good gracious, Master Jack can surely take care of bad men. He surely can."

"I think," said Kate, "that our master will protect us and I thank the good Lord."

On another day when Bobbie was far behind with his cows as they were passing a nice farm house the tired beasts finding the front gate open rushed in upon the lawn to graze and worst of all trampled on some flowers. Instantly Bobbie was after them but with only one hand he could not use the whip very well and still guide the horse with the reins.

ALONG THE OPEN ROAD

Soon a lady came out, saw the trouble and called two young Negro slaves who helped Bobbie drive the cows out into the road.

No sooner were the unruly cows on their way than Bobbie turned, dismounted and went in to apologize to the lady for what the cows had done. He said, "Lady, the old cows messed up your lawn and ruined some of your flowers before I could stop them but my father will pay you whatever is right."

"Well, well!" said she, "and do you really think I want pay for an accident? Why child, you couldn't help it. How did you hurt your arm?" Bobbie told her and she said, "Well you are a fine little man. Come in won't you and have some cake or pie and a nice cool drink?"

"No, ma'am. Thank you," said Bobbie. "It's my job to drive the cows to

BOB, THE PIONEER

Missouri and if I don't keep after them they may get into more devilment."

Then the lady laughed, called a servant to bring some drinking water and with her own hands plucked a rose and pinned it on Bobbie's shirt. Then when he had finished drinking she said, "I know you'll make a fine man out in the West. Goodbye and God bless you."

Bobbie remounted old Dick and followed the cows. Soon he was singing as of old. When he drove the cows into camp that evening he was singing again.

Late one afternoon the travelers camped at a fine spring by the road side. It was a most beautiful spot with trees, grass and wild flowers in abundance. While Kate was cooking the men were caring for the horse and mules and Bobbie's mother was rubbing liniment on the injured arm, Grace climbed up a little hill back of the camp to get some pretty

ALONG THE OPEN ROAD

flowers. She then called everybody to come and see what she had found. It was a great arbor made by placing poles across from tree to tree and roofing this over with leafy branches. Beneath were rude seats. This arbor was used by the community for camp meetings.

Soon people began to arrive for the meeting and they came over to the camp and invited the travelers to join in their services that night.

Ben and Kate stayed in camp but Bobbie, Grace and their parents went to the meeting. The sermon was about two hours in length and of course, Bobbie and Grace were both asleep long before the preacher had finished but they awoke when the singing began again.

The next morning as Ben worked about the camp he sang one after another every song that had been sung at the camp meeting and for a week or

BOB, THE PIONEER

more, every day as he drove along the open road he sang over and over again these songs. In some of these songs Ben had the words badly mixed but the tunes were all in order.

Although Grace had slept most of the time while the sermon was being delivered she surprised Bobbie the next day by imitating the singsong style of delivery and the peculiar gestures of the pioneer preacher. Bobbie laughed at the imitations but cautioned Grace not to let her parents hear her. Grace, reasoning that if her parents would disapprove then it must be wrong, soon ceased to give these imitations.

Day by day they moved along and each night they camped a day's journey nearer to St. Louis.

CHAPTER X

BOBBIE'S LONG JOURNEY (Continued) IN MISSOURI

One day the teams were halted and when Bobbie arrived the travelers were standing on the banks of the Mississippi River, looking over into St. Louis. In due time they were taken across the river in a ferry boat and here they encamped. They stayed at St. Louis for several days gathering information and buying supplies. Here was a large number of people—Frenchmen, hunters in buckskin, plainsmen with rifles and knives, rivermen, slaves, Indians in feathers and beaded moccasins, freighters, and adventurers of all kinds. Here also were the finest houses Bobbie had ever seen, some of them two stories high. These

BOB, THE PIONEER

were a source of wonder to Bobbie and Grace. The boats that came in and departed on the river were of much interest also.

One day when Bobbie was with his father in town they went to see a gentleman and Bobbie remembered the man's replies about as follows: "Yes, my name is Daniel Morgan Boone. Yes, I know western Missouri. I trapped beaver for a good many years just south of the Missouri River where the Kaw River empties into it. I have trapped on the Big Blue and the Little Blue. In between these creeks you will find a rich country. You will also find, if you go there, that the Osage Indians have all left. They may come back once in awhile to visit but they have quit that part of the country. No, I don't think you will find anything but Catholic churches. The Jesuits have a mission at the mouth of

IN MISSOURI

the Kaw River. Chouteau has a trading post there. Yes, all of these Indians—Osage and Kaw—are of the Siouan origin. Surely, you will find prairie land and timbered land. Yes, the country is well watered and fertile. It is being settled most rapidly. Yes, you might find some settler who wants to leave and would sell to you. I don't know about that. Yes, there are some settlements between here and that place. Up the Missouri River near the middle of the state they are building the town of Jefferson City. It is just started, and up the river from there is Boonville which is older. Only thirty miles from Jefferson City a new town has been started. They call it Columbia. At Fort Sibley, I think, it might be well to stop unless you go by boat and in that case it would be better to go on to Westport Landing. There the Chouteau Trading Post could fit you

BOB, THE PIONEER

out and give you the information you want. No, it was no trouble at all. I am glad to tell you anything I know about the country. Yes, there is plenty of game in that country. There are deer and elk but nearly all the buffalo have drifted west to the plains. Yes, I am the third son of the famous Daniel Boone. Yes, come back if you want to ask me any more questions about the country."

After this information had been received Bobbie's father decided that they should start at once for western Missouri and locate there if the country seemed to him as good as Boone had said it was.

It was at this time that the decision was made to make the rest of the journey by boat. Instead of driving the cows through the rest of the way, Bobbie drove them onto the boat and then with nothing to do, he and Grace watched the

IN MISSOURI

banks observing different kinds of people. They also watched the men at work and were especially interested in the loading and unloading of the boat's cargo whenever it was docked. The boat did not make fast time up the river but to Bobbie it seemed a very rapid mode of travel and certainly it was an easy journey. Once the boat lodged on a sand bar and it was of interest to Bobbie to watch the procedure as they got out of this difficulty. Kate became almost panic stricken for fear they could not get off the sand bar. When the boat at last was free and started on up the river she said with a sigh, "I thank the good Lord."

At every landing the boat stopped. Sometimes it stayed several hours. This boat had a regular run, regular customers, and business seemed to be good.

Within a few days the boat docked at Westport Landing late in the after-

BOB, THE PIONEER

noon and the travelers went ashore. There all about were Indian tepees. Near by stood the Jesuit Mission and most prominent of all the Chouteau Trading Post.

The next day the wagons rolled southeastward from Westport Landing and Bobbie drove the cows after them. At noontime the travelers camped on the Big Blue River. That afternoon they crossed the Big Blue and proceeded eastward where they had been told a settler lived who wished to sell out. They did not find the place that evening but camped where woodland and rolling prairie joined. The next morning they located the place they were seeking. It was a large tract of land partly of prairie and partly of timbered land. A large double log house had been built only a few years before. A cabin for the slaves, barns, hen house, and smoke

IN MISSOURI

house completed the cluster of buildings. The owner, whose wife had died, desired to return to New York and offered the place for sale. It was not long before he and Mr. Wright had made a bargain. The purchase included the land, its improvements and all live stock which consisted of horses, cattle, hogs and poultry.

At Independence, a newly established village, they found a notary public and the deed was made. Then Bobbie's father told Ben to bring the collar off old Rock, one of the mules in the team which Mr. Wright had been driving. When the collar was brought, he clipped the stitching with his knife and opening it took out the money (two thousand dollars) that was to go for the purchasing of the home and it seemed that he had a large sum of the money left. The remainder was not placed in the mule's collar this time but in Mr. Wright's

BOB, THE PIONEER

pocket. Then the family journeyed back to their new home. Bobbie, Grace, father, mother, and the baby were in the big house; Ben, Kate, and Dink were in the slave quarters; the mules, horses, cattle, and hogs rested in the barn lot; the chickens were in the hen house, and Drum, Lead and Blue lay by the side of the house seemingly with the intention of resting forever.

By and by, candles were blown out and all sounds ceased except those made by the frogs at the brook and the whip-poorwills in the woods. Bobbie and the family were at last safe in their new home.

CHAPTER XI

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

In the new home there were busy days. Every morning before daylight came Mr. Wright arose, lighted the fire, called Ben and then opening the door to the stairway called, "Bob!" Soon the boy was out, milk pail in hand going toward the barn lot, still sleepy, but greeted by the coming dawn, by Ben's singing, and by the sounds of industry as his father and Ben were at work about the place getting ready for another day. Bobbie would soon quicken his pace and with the swing of the work become busy also. Often he too would sing as he milked the cows and worked at the other morning chores. As full daylight came through the trees and lighted up the home, Bob-

BOB, THE PIONEER

bie would return to the house, set the bucket of foaming milk down where Kate would attend to it later, wash his face and hands, comb his hair, and sit down with the family at the breakfast table in the dining room where Kate would serve the "white folks," while Ben ate in the kitchen. Always as the sun came up these three—Bobbie, Ben and the master—were ready to begin another day's work.

The settlers of the neighborhood were fine sociable people and it was not long until Mr. Wright knew all of his neighbors. One of the efforts the people decided to make for community welfare was to erect a schoolhouse and educate their children. For several days thereafter Ben and his master felled trees while Bobbie trimmed off limbs from the tree trunks. Then the trunks were cut into proper lengths for house-building

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

logs. Other farmers and their slaves were also busy cutting logs. When the logs were ready they were hauled to the place where the schoolhouse was to be built. This place was not more than a mile from Bobbie's home.

Finally the day was set for the log rolling. On that day the Wright family got up and ate breakfast before the sun came up. At sun-up Bobbie's father drove his team to the clearing where the schoolhouse was to be raised while Bobbie sat by him on the spring seat and Ben sat in the back of the wagon, singing as usual.

Soon after sun-up masters and servants, men and boys were on the ground with broad axes and other tools. Then the work of raising the schoolhouse began. "Many hands make light tasks" and so in one day arose the crude "temple of learning." For several days after-

BOB, THE PIONEER

wards a few men were busy about the schoolhouse completing minor details such as cutting out a door and two windows, and making seats out of split logs. Speedily the schoolhouse was finished and a teacher, a middle-aged man, was employed. The parents agreed to pay tuition for there were no public schools as yet in the new country.

After the schoolhouse was completed the regular farm duties were resumed at Bobbie's home.

One rainy day Bobbie and his father went out to the barn where Ben was mending harness. They were not talking and on account of the dampness of the ground they made no noise in their approach. When they came to the open door Ben quickly closed his pocket knife and put it in his pocket but not before Bobbie's father saw the knife and recognized it as one that had belonged to his father.

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

"Let me see your knife, Ben," said he.

"Please, master," said the slave as he surrendered the knife. "Let me keep it. My old master gave it to me to mark pigs with and he passed away suddenly before he asked me for it. Please let me keep it to remember him by."

Only for a moment the master held the knife. Then he returned it to Ben and said, "Ben if you feel that way about it the knife is yours."

"Thank you, Master Jack. Thank you," said Ben.

When Bobbie and his father left the barn the boy said, "That is a fine knife. Why did you let him keep it? Didn't he really steal it or at least get it dishonestly?"

"Bob," said his father, "we must not judge a slave by the standard of a freeman. In his own mind Ben has reasoned that the knife should be his. It is

BOB, THE PIONEER

a small matter and slaves really get little enough out of life. Let Ben keep it. He would feel injured, wronged perhaps, if I took it. Never be too severe with one over whom you have power."

"But it is a fine knife," said Bobbie.

"Yes," said his father, "it was imported from England. It has been in our family a long time. My grandfather bought it and gave it to my father when I was a small boy."

"I wish I could have it," said the boy. "I have no knife."

"Bob," said his father, "you would not want to hurt Ben's feelings and make him feel that we thought him dishonest just in order that you could have a pocket knife, would you?"

"I think not," said Bobbie.

That knife was never again a subject of discussion between father and

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

son but not long thereafter when his father returned from town one evening he brought a new pocket knife for Bobbie.

One morning Bobbie started to school with his one book, slate, pencil and a dinner bucket filled as only a slave and her mistress know how to contrive. The two red apples for which there was no room in the bucket were put in the pockets of Bobbie's jean coat.

School usually began soon after sunrise and continued (with the usual morning, noon and afternoon recesses) until nearly sundown. The plan was that the pupils would start from home at sunrise and be back home by sunset. Bobbie was not more than an average pupil. He was mischievous like other boys but was careful not to make any serious trouble perhaps more from fear of what

BOB, THE PIONEER

his father would say than from any love of the teacher.

The girls wore calico or linsey-woolsey dresses and the boys wore home-made jean suits; in fact, they were just such boys and girls as were found at that time in any other neighborhood of the new state.

In the second week when returning from school, Bobbie was startled by the sight of three elk fleeing through the woods and this fact was reported to his father as soon as the boy returned home. Ben became excited and wanted to go after them at once but Mr. Wright said, "They were scared and are perhaps many miles from here now but there are many elk in this country. At the right time we can try to get some of them, but not tonight."

The next day at noontime Bobbie and two of his little friends were play-

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

ing down by the spring where persimmon trees grew. They were startled from their play when they looked up and saw an Indian warrior standing over them. He stood quietly and simply grunted, "How!" The boys silently and hurriedly withdrew and notified the teacher. He gathered in all the children. While they were lined up at the door listening to the teacher urging them to be cautious and brave, they were again startled by a group of Indians coming around the schoolhouse and standing behind the line of children. Then in unison the Indians said, "How!" The children were called into the house and the Indians then looked in through the two windows and the door. The teacher seemed much amazed when one of the Indians explained in broken English, "Indians want to see the white papooses make leaves talk." Then the teacher un-

BOB, THE PIONEER

derstood that they wanted to hear the children read from the books. To please the Indians he called the reading class. Some of the Indians were so curious they came in and peeped over the heads of the children to look closely at the books. Bobbie gave his book to one Indian and the other Indians grouped around that one to share the book, sometimes turning it upside down and studying it from all angles, trying to learn where the words came from. At last the Indians seemed to give up trying to understand this strange thing, gave it back to Bobbie and silently disappeared in the forest.

The school term that year was three months which in Bobbie's mind was a long time. Early in the session Bobbie learned many things from the other boys and one of these things was never to carry left over food home in the dinner pail. The schoolboys felt that there should never be

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

any food taken home; hence on the way home at evening if any food had been left the pails were emptied. In following this plan Bobbie always stopped in the woods at the edge of his father's farm and before climbing over the fence threw out all left over food. What the boy did not know was that he was feeding the creatures of the wild regularly in a certain spot and the wolves, wildcats and other wild creatures soon learned that they could find food there every evening. So it was that as these creatures coming from their caverns in the near-by bluff prepared to start on their night of hunting food, whether by chance or design, they often passed this place and if food had been left they had no trouble in finding it.

At last the teacher announced a spelling match to be held in the schoolhouse on Friday night. To this "spelling bee" everyone was invited. That evening Bob-

BOB, THE PIONEER

bie's friend, Tom, went home with him in order to be nearer to the place of the meeting. The two boys, anxious to be on hand early at the spelling match left the house before the other members of the family were ready to go. A northeast wind was blowing and snow was flying as the two boys raced through the field, facing the driving snow, hurrying on to be early at the schoolhouse. With them were the three old hounds—Drum, Lead and Blue.

On the boys raced against the storm and when they reached the line fence where the heavy forest began they were almost out of breath. They climbed the fence in silence. But no sooner had the hounds entered the woods than a terrific baying was heard and the chase was on. They were running by sight. Following them and yelling came Bobbie and Tom. "They are right on him," said Bobbie. "It's a wolf I know." Sometimes the chase

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

circled and the boys cut across to try to catch up. Down through the forest, over brush and brambles of every kind raced the boys following the din of the wild chase. At last not far away they heard the battle as the chase ended but ere they could reach the dogs the kill had been made. Bobbie's pocket knife was out at once and the wolf's scalp was removed. Then the boys discovered two things. They were very, very tired and they had no idea in what direction lay the school-house or home.

"Well," said Tom, "what will we do? I was never here before and don't even know how to start home. Well, what are we going to do, Bobbie?"

"Well," said Bobbie, "sure we were never here before and we never were out alone on a chase before and caught a big timber wolf either. We'll get home some way. Let's go down this branch."

BOB, THE PIONEER

So down the branch they went. After walking a mile or more they came to where the branch emptied into a large creek. "This must be Big Blue," said Bobbie, "so we will have to go right back again. We live on the ridge land between the Big Blue and Little Blue." Another hour was consumed in trudging back to higher ground. The wind had changed to the north. The air was getting colder but the snowing had ceased. Once in awhile the boys stopped to listen to the strange sounds but none of them were sounds from their home.

By and by Tom decided he could go no farther. "What's the use?" he said. "We don't know where we are going. Let's sit down and rest."

"If we sit down to rest we'll freeze," said Bobbie. On they went again but every time the boys stopped the dogs were busy giving first aid to their own wounds

BOBBIE'S SCHOOL DAYS

by licking them. Bobbie became impatient and scolded the hounds. Then a plan was thought out by him. "Let's club these dogs and they will go home and then we will follow them," said he.

"Maybe they won't go home," said Tom.

"Yes, they will," Bobbie replied. Then the boys scolded the hounds and threw clubs at them. The old hounds thoroughly disgusted started straight for home.

After the snowing had ceased the moon came out and it was now clear but very, very cold. The boys were unable to keep up with the hounds but by the moonlight they were enabled to follow the hounds' tracks in the snow. It had grown colder and colder and the night was far gone when the two tired boys still following the hounds' tracks in the snow dragged their weary feet up to Bobbie's

BOB, THE PIONEER

home. A candle was burning and Bobbie's mother was waiting for them. She knew the boys had followed the hounds because she had heard the beginning of the chase. Soon the boys were eating the food saved for them and after that they were tucked away in a warm bed.

CHAPTER XII

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

When the second school year began Bobbie took his sister with him. His parents had told him to take good care of little sister. Since Bobbie really wanted to care for her and his parents had told him to do so, Grace became an object of care and responsibility for this sturdy little man. Of course Bobbie sometimes assumed control over Grace when she resented what she called his "bossiness." Often she said to her mother, "Bobbie is just plumb mulish stubborn and I have to put up with it." She also told her mother that Bobbie was sometimes rough in helping her over the fence. She said, "He jerks me over and then yanks me along." Bobbie would reply, "Grace is so pokey

BOB, THE PIONEER

slow that we would never get to school if I didn't yank her along sometimes."

One day when the children were all starting home from school, Sussie Corn, a larger girl, slapped Grace. Bobbie caught the larger girl's hair and in his own language "yanked her out of it." So forcefully did he yank that Sussie fell backwards in the mud. Then Sussie's brother Dick, a larger boy, got into the fight and soon Bobbie was underneath the larger boy. However, Bobbie was still doing his best. Grace thought that Bobbie was being killed and in tears she asked the children to take that big boy off her brother. Then one of the older boys called out, "Hey, Dick, let him up! You are too big to fight him anyway." But Dick yelled out, "Well he is still fighting like a wild-cat and won't say 'nuf, and—oh! oh! ouch!" yelled Dick, for Bobbie had closed his teeth on the larger boy's thumb and



Elk Caught by the Storm Were Living off the Hay

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

held on like a bulldog with his teeth while with hands and feet he was doing what damage he could to the larger boy. In the end Dick had to give up by crying "Nuf, 'nuf," thus admitting that he himself was conquered.

When the fight was over it was found that Dick's thumb was bitten to the bone, his face was marked, and his clothes torn. Bobbie had been rolled in the mud and beaten until he was so muddy and bloody that he was hardly recognizable. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the boys of the school he was from that time on a hero. Never again did any of the boys of the Woodland School strike him for they said, "That little wildcat won't ever quit."

Soon Bobbie and Grace turned out into the woods; the other children taking separate paths to their homes and Grace said, "Oh Bobbie you look awful. Will you ever get well?"

BOB, THE PIONEER

"Hush up! What were you and Sus-sie fussing over anyway?" said Bobbie.

"I just called her a skunk," said Grace. "I didn't think she would hit me."

"What did you call her that for?" said Bobbie.

"Oh, she has asafetida on her," said Grace.

"Ya!" said Bobbie, "you women folks are always starting trouble."

By this time the two children had reached a brook and Bobbie washed his face. With sticks he and Grace scraped some of the mud off his clothes but they could not mend the torn garments or conceal the bruises on the boy's face and so when they reached home, explanations were in order. Bobbie's mother explained to him the evils of fighting but his father never discussed the incident.

One morning a cold rain began as a mist just when the children were starting

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

to school but soon it turned to sleet. That evening as they were returning home over the icy ground, the children were sliding here and there and once in awhile running and making a skate of it. This was a delight to Grace although she frequently fell. So fascinated was she by her skating that she kept it up after Bobbie told her to quit for they were near the bluff. But she kept on skating and finally fell over the cliff and was hurt. Bobbie carried her on his back and slowly trudged on over the icy ground but he could not go fast. Often he fell but the fall seemed to hurt her more than it did him. At last they came to the end of the woods and just as Bobbie placed Grace on their own line fence they heard Ben coming singing as usual. Ben had been sent out to see what had happened to the children for it was getting dark. The slave had rags tied over his shoes so that he did not slip on

BOB, THE PIONEER

the ice. At once he relieved Bobbie of his load. At the house, examination revealed that the smaller bone in the lower part of Grace's leg was broken. When this was announced Bobbie seemed to feel that he was to blame for not taking better care of his sister. But Grace said to her mother, "No, Bobbie told me not to do it. Next time I'll do as he says."

"Nobody was to blame," said Bobbie's father. "Ben, saddle the old black horse and I'll go for a doctor. It may be after midnight when we get back here, but we'll come. Keep up the fire, Ben. Kate, have some hot coffee and food ready for the doctor." Then he ate hurriedly and rode away into the darkness and Grace slept.

While Grace was confined to the bed, Bobbie voluntarily became her teacher. Every day he paid particular attention to the work of the little ones (A, B, C class)

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

at school and faithfully tried to teach his sister just as the children were taught at school. Often he went to sleep while waiting between lessons for Grace to study the assignment. Mamma would awaken him and urge him to go to bed but the boy would say, "No, I've got to do this. I ought to have made her quit skating." What Bobbie never knew was that Mamma was Grace's teacher in the daytime. They did not tell Bobbie because they knew he thought it was his duty to teach Grace and he would resent any interference.

By and by there came a day dawning when snow was everywhere and Bobbie waded waist deep through it to the barn lot to milk. When he came back to the kitchen with the milk the bucket was on his shoulder for he could not hold out straight at arm's length the full bucket. It was too heavy. That day was Saturday. All day Ben, Bobbie and the master

BOB, THE PIONEER

worked breaking out paths to the out-buildings and from the barn to the spring so that the stock could go and get a drink. On Sunday there was more snow, until noon when the sun came out on glittering white fields and forests. Fences were hidden, forests were still, and only the low sighing of the north wind driving the white crystals here and there disturbed the universal silence.

No school was held during the period of the big snow but Bobbie was busy for every morning the paths that had been cleaned out the day before were full or partly full of snow again. One day late in the afternoon when Bobbie was pitching hay from the barn loft he looked down over the field and saw something moving about near the distant hay stacks. He called his father and Ben and the three soon decided that some elks had been caught in the storm and were living off

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

of the hay. It was almost sundown then and Bobbie's father decided that in the morning they would try to kill an elk.

Early the next morning the three started out. Bobbie and his father each had a gun and Ben had a club. Ben started first and was to go around the field beyond the hay stacks and get between them and the woods so that he would attract the attention of the elks. Bobbie and his father were to sneak up close enough to get a shot but that was a slow, gruelling trip. Bobbie was in the snow waist deep. Sometimes in walking he would come upon a depression in the ground and would sink in up to his chin, but he held his gun out of the snow and struggled on. After an hour or more, Ben was seen apparently standing on the snow at the proper place (he was standing on the fence). Bobbie and his father were not yet quite close enough to shoot but the elks, seeing Ben,

BOB, THE PIONEER

dashed out from the hay stacks on the farthest side from where Bobbie was, but directly toward where Bobbie's father crouched in the deep snow. Soon a shot was fired and the elks turned about and came toward Bobbie. When the two elks came within range Bobbie rose up but at that he was only head and shoulders above the snow level. The elks saw him and turned at right angles. Bobbie took the best aim he could at the larger one and fired. The recoil of the heavily loaded gun threw him back in the snow but he arose quickly and stared in surprise for both elks were struggling on rapidly. Bobbie could hardly believe that he had missed an object so large. As he watched the running elks Ben shouted and the big elk fell behind, faltered, stood still and finally lay down. No, he had not missed; he had killed the bull elk.

Soon the three hunters stood over the

THE YEAR OF THE BIG SNOW

fallen monarch. Then Bobbie learned that his father had not missed either for there was another dead elk on the other side of the hay stacks. Back to the house they went following the shorter trail—the one which Bobbie had broken. Bobbie took the guns into the house and told of the kill while Ben and his master caught up three horses. Bobbie was placed in front on Dick, the old black saddle horse, to follow the trail back to the hay stacks. Behind him came Ben and his father each riding a horse on which harness had been placed. Tying ropes to the feet of the elks, the two harnessed horses ridden by Ben and his master dragged the game after them through the snow back to the barn lot.

The elk hides were cured. Mamma got the smaller one but Bobbie gave the big one to his little sister. The antlers he kept for himself. The meat of the elks was placed in the smoke house.

CHAPTER XIII

CHANGES AS THE YEARS WENT BY

Bobbie's legs and arms grew longer and stronger, his feet and hands grew larger and no one but his mother called him Bobbie—he was just plain Bob.

He was much interested in caring for the stock on the farm and often with his hounds he chased wolves and other marauding creatures that sought to prey upon the domestic animals.

There were wild turkeys roaming about and Bob soon learned to call and bring them in as well as any older woodsman. Being an excellent shot he supplied the family with much wild game such as turkeys, squirrels, rabbits, and deer. Often with his gun he would spend whole days in the forest hunting or trapping

CHANGES AS THE YEARS WENT BY

wild creatures but more often he took the hounds along for he delighted in the chase.

At early dawn one morning Bob went down into the forest to look for a young calf which was not with the other cattle as it should have been. Nothing was observed to indicate that the calf had gone that way but Bob was just ready to turn around and go back when he saw a strange creature leisurely trotting along the valley by the brook. It was evidently of the cat family but it was too big for a common wildcat and besides it had a tassel on either ear and this characteristic together with its enormous size convinced Bob that it was a lynx.

As soon as this creature was out of sight Bob whirled around and ran to the house. With one hand he took a gun from the rack over the door and with the other the hunting horn and rushing out of doors he blew a loud call that brought the

BOB, THE PIONEER

hounds to him in a hurry. Grace rushed out to learn the cause of the excitement but all she heard was one word, lynx, as Bob and the hounds dashed away.

As the family, still seated at the breakfast table, were discussing the situation the hounds found the warm trail and opened in full cry. Ben wanted to go but the master said, "No, Bob didn't ask for help. I guess he wants the fun all to himself." An hour or two passed and then Bob appeared with the lynx hide on his shoulder and the hounds following at his heels. The lynx had run only about half a mile, then climbed a tree and Bob had shot it. But even when it sprang from the tree with a death wound it had fought furiously as the slashed hounds bore mute testimony. Bobbie also reported that while returning from the chase he had found the calf dead and half eaten by some wild beast.

CHANGES AS THE YEARS WENT BY

One winter there was no school for no teacher had been found. It was too bad for baby brother, little George, was old enough to go and Grace and Bob were eager to take him. Bob, by chance, met the Osage Indians that fall when they came for their annual visit to their old hunting grounds and the graves of their fathers. Soon Bob was on friendly terms with them. He learned some of their language and much of the sign language. One young Osage, Yellow Hawk, became so attached to Bob that he came to the house and ate dinner. Yellow Hawk could talk English but when he did so Grace could not suppress a titter for he said "Hoggie pork meat" and "meal flour bread" and in many other ways his expressions amused her. Only that one time could Bob induce the Hawk to come to his home.

Late in the winter came an epidemic

BOB, THE PIONEER

of diphtheria or membranous croup. The country doctor did not understand it or was not understood. But whatever it was several children in the neighborhood died. Bob's little brother became ill one night. His father rode through the night snow storm and brought the doctor but in vain were the efforts. After two days of suffering the little one's life went out. Oh, but it was lonesome through the long, snowy days and solemn nights waiting for springtime to come!

In February there came a general thawing out with fog, mud, and warmer days. Then Grace was out of doors much of the time until she took a severe cold and Mamma made her stay indoors and try some home remedies. But Grace's cold grew rapidly worse. When the doctor came he called it pneumonia. Then there was general anxiety and this ended the worst way within the week. Grace's new-

CHANGES AS THE YEARS WENT BY

made grave and little brother's were out in the cold, rain, and sleet. Mother sighed and cried nearly every moment and Dad was so silent. Even Ben's singing was not heard often and then only when far away from his master's house.

One year a lady teacher was employed to teach the Woodland School but when the time for the opening of school arrived Bob did not want to go. His mother urged him but he said, "I don't want to go to a woman teacher and besides Grace and little George are not here for me to take care of and I'm not going."

That evening while Bob was out finishing the work about the barn the mother said, "Jack, Bobbie has refused to go to school."

"Why did he refuse?" asked the father. When he had heard all Bob had said, he replied, "Now, Mother, just let him alone for he too has suffered perhaps more

BOB, THE PIONEER

than we know. Time may heal his heart wounds. God only knows. Let him alone."

At breakfast on the Monday that school opened, Bob's father asked him if he wanted to go to school and when the boy said, "No," his father said, "All right. You may help us clear up the woods north of the house this winter."

Day by day rang the axes of the three pioneers and Bob grew more rugged and powerful as he approached his sixteenth birthday which would be in March.



The Buffalo Stampede

CHAPTER XIV

ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

Many young men in the vicinity of Bob's home were being employed to drive teams across the plains, and Bob wanted to go too. Finally his father consented. Bob's mother objected at first but when the father suggested that the trip might lighten the boy's grief she said, "Oh, all right. If anything would help us I know we should do it." Later she said to her son, "Go with God, Bobbie."

Bob secured employment readily at man's wages from one of the many companies engaged in hauling freight over the western trail. Bull Warner was the wagon boss to whom Bob was directed to report. Bull's train consisted of ten teams of six yokes of oxen each. These ten teams

BOB, THE PIONEER

were hitched to ten big prairie schooners that were heavily loaded with freight for the far West.

Bull placed older, seasoned drivers in the front. Bob and the other new recruits were near the middle and other seasoned drivers in the rear of the train. These bull-whackers, for so these teamsters were called, were men from all walks and stations of life with perhaps only one thing in common—love of adventure.

The train started with the cracking of bull whips and the mingled rough voices of men frequently punctuated with oaths as the oxen laboriously drew the ponderous wagons forward. The train started from Independence early in the morning and passed Bob's home about two o'clock in the afternoon. Bob was surprised in passing to see his mother and father, Ben, Kate, and little Dink all standing by the roadside to see his train

ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

go by. He left the side of his ox team, toiling on the road, and rushed over to tell his mother goodbye. In his hurry and confusion he lifted his little mother from the ground to plant the parting kiss and then more gently lowered her to the earth, waved to Dad and was soon a part of the caravan westward bound.

That night the camp was made just beyond the town of Westport. A night guard of two men was placed to ride herd on the grazing cattle, a guard of two men was detailed to stay at the camp and all the others were released.

Soon Bull Warner was seated by the campfire and as the men who were not assigned to duty began preparing to go into town, he called Bob to him and said, "Son, your Dad talked to me about you and I promised to look after you. That's a rough bunch going to town. You may go if you want to, but watch yourself and

BOB, THE PIONEER

don't let them get your hide full of red licker."

"All right," said Bob as he buckled on his Colt's revolver which he had not worn after entering camp. Soon he joined the group. He was going to see the sights with men—he-men.

That was a wild night, indeed, but Bob kept sober in spite of the urging of the others. About midnight as the men were preparing to return to camp one of the crowd said that Bob must drink and attempted to compel the youth to take a drink from his bottle. But Bob knocked the bottle away and when the man struck at him he received a surprise for the youth knocked him down three successive times. In fact, Bob seemed capable of continuing the performance indefinitely and with either fist, but the drunken man drew his revolver. Then so quickly that all were again surprised, Bob grabbed the

ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

man's gun with one hand and turned the shot aside while with the other hand he brought his own Colt's revolver down on the man's head with such force that Red Rown, the bully of the train, remained unconscious until he was carried to camp and laid at Bull Warner's feet with full explanation. Bull was silent until Red sat up and began to swear. Then the boss gave him such a reprimand as Red had never received. Turning to Bob, Bull said, "Son, you did exactly what I would have wished a boy of mine to do." This affair established Bob's reputation in that outfit for all time.

The next day Red was unable to drive his team which was driven by one of the extra men of the outfit, but by night Red walked up to Bob and said, "Kid, I guess I was drunk last night but you are a man and you taught me a lesson. I lost my front teeth and got a good crack on the

BOB, THE PIONEER

head but, Kid, if you'll shake I'm with you." Bob shook hands and, in accordance with the code of the trail, the incident was closed.

There followed days and nights with the long, long trail leading on over seas of green. One morning about nine o'clock the scout on the right of the train came dashing in signaling to the bull-whackers to corral the stock because a buffalo stampede was coming. Quickly the ponderous wagons were formed in a circle with the cattle and horses inside and all the men on the north side of the group fully armed. Bull Warner with a buffalo gun ready as the first of a sea of frightened buffaloes came, shot one of the leaders at about thirty paces from the corral and all the other rifles spoke for each man had been instructed to put a bullet into the animal Bull selected so that there could be no error for the buffalo must be dead. The dead

ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

buffalo lying there split the herd and for hours the grim plainsmen watched the mass of animals swerve right and left of the corralled train. How many were there in that herd? They were numberless. Where were they going? What started them? Who knows? But when they were gone the frightened oxen were hitched to the wagons again and by night the train was beyond the trampled grass and the oxen grazed as peacefully on fresh, green grass as if no thundering herd had ever threatened their lives. At evening the freighters feasted on buffalo hump, a special steak cut from the hump of the buffalo.

At sun-up, westward rolled the long train. Bob walking by his team urged them on; now he prodded old Buck, the leader, then cracked his whip on lazy Jerry. All day long he was busy in seeing that every ox did his part. Other similar

BOB, THE PIONEER

days and nights followed. The men took turns at night herding under the stars while the restless winds of the great plains swept onward into the limitless waste lands. Over the plains day by day the train crept on and at last came to Santa Fe—the journey's end.

CHAPTER XV

INDIANS

Along the Santa Fe Trail numberless herds of antelopes and buffaloes grazed—the “cattle” of the plains Indians. From these herds the Indians procured their meat, the principal supply of food for them, and also skins for tepees, bedding and clothing. In short, these herds furnished the red men their three essentials—food, shelter, and clothing.

To the Indians the supply seemed limitless until the white men with “fire sticks” came to the plains and began the slaughter of the herds. Then there arose a spirit of resentment among the Indians. They resented the coming of these white men, and they often stampeded or stole the animals of the white men’s trains.

BOB, THE PIONEER

Sometimes by starting buffalo stampedes they would destroy a whole train—animals and men; or, once in awhile they fought with the plainsmen and these were bloody battles. Usually, however, the Indians were friendly. Often they visited with the freighters and sometimes a small band of them would accompany a train for a day or two along the trail.

Bob knew something of the sign language and Bull taught him many words and phrases of the Pawnee, Ute and other dialects of the Indian tribes of the plains region.

When the train returned to Independence in the fall Bob was engaged for the next year and told that he would be chief mounted scout if he wished and thus it was arranged even before Bob returned to his father's home.

With the plainsmen in the camps Bob had learned many songs and sang them

INDIANS

in deep full tones, much to Ben's delight. Ben looked up to Bob's great height and admired his young master's strength. He also listened wide-eyed to the recounting of Bob's adventures in the far West.

One day when Bob and his mother were alone she said, "Bobbie, I was glad to get the letter you sent to me by the other train when you were on the way to Santa Fe but I've worried about it. Were you discouraged?"

"No, mam. Why?" said Bob.

"Well," she said, "you closed it with a peculiar expression at least. Here it is."

Bob read it and laughed for the closing was as follows: "Give my love to the dogs. Your son, Bob."

"Why Mamma," said he, "it was just my way of remembering old Drum, Lead, and Blue. I did miss them some but not as much as I missed you all."

Soon the Osages were reported to be

BOB, THE PIONEER

in the vicinity and Bob went at once to find the Hawk. Finally he persuaded the young Indian to agree to go with him on the Santa Fe Trail the next year. Old Bull, the wagon boss, agreed that the Hawk could accompany the train but said the Indian's pay would depend on the services rendered. This was entirely satisfactory to the Hawk and the agreement was accordingly made.

Back over the trail rolled old Bull's train the next spring and on one side of the train rode the Hawk as scout. In front rode Bob as chief of the scouts, while another scout rode on the other side and still another one trailed on far behind. Old Bull knew that the plains Indians were hostile and he feared trouble; hence, he would take no chances.

There was one man with this train who soon proved to be a real problem. He was a titled Englishman who wanted to

INDIANS

see America. He was not employed by the freighters but went along as a sight-seer. At first, this tourist insisted upon being with the Hawk who seemed to dislike the man. Bob told the Hawk to be patient but he also told the Englishman that he must not annoy the young Indian. Finally the wagon boss ordered the Englishman not to ride on the side of the train where the Hawk was scouting. Bull said, "Man, I know redskin nature and I tell you not to bother that Osage. He don't like your ways. No sir."

The Englishman was riding a magnificent thoroughbred, black stallion. He was not satisfied to desist when he had told all the good points of his own mount but he ridiculed the mounts of the other men. Naturally these men did not enjoy this and it was also just as natural that they should be ready to put this English-

BOB, THE PIONEER

man to ridicule should there be a chance to do so.

One evening just at dusk there passed near the camp a mother skunk and her four kittens going by in single file and seemingly without fear of the men. When the Englishman asked about them he was told they were prairie kittens and very gentle. At once he went to get one. He would send it to his sister in New York. But skunks are not without defense as the stranger learned.

After that the Englishman, knowing that the men were not fond of him and were ready to play practical jokes to his disadvantage, avoided them and began to ride far afield each day and also to talk with roaming bands of Indians that began at this time to visit the train frequently. The wagon boss told the Englishman to avoid leaving the train as he and all his men believed these small bands of

INDIANS

Indians were only forerunners of real Indian trouble. But even the next day the Englishman stayed behind the wagons talking to three Indians who admired the Englishman's horse and were offering to trade for it. The Englishman did not return to the train again and so at mid-afternoon Bull made camp and sent Bob and the Hawk back to find the Englishman. He was so much annoyed by the delay that he said whenever he met a returning wagon train the Englishman must go back. He would not be delayed by the stubborn tenderfoot again.

The Englishman's body was found lying on the prairie. His scalp was gone. The Indians evidently had secured the coveted saddle stallion. Although the Hawk had not been fond of the Englishman he felt that the signal for battle had been given by these Comanches and was anxious to lead the scouts or even to go

BOB, THE PIONEER

alone to trail the offenders down and in his language "lift their hair." Finally Bob persuaded him to remain with the train but the Hawk felt that his outfit had received an insult and ought to exact the death penalty, or if need be, go down in battle rather than have their honor tarnished. For days the Hawk was morose and silent. Not even Bob whom he called brother could draw his mind away from what he called their shame.

Old Bull cautioned his outfit to keep quiet for said he, "The Hawk will get over it but we may need his keen vision sometime and if we do have to fight that Osage will be a demon and don't you forget it."

If the Hawk was dissatisfied he was nevertheless alert and he talked to each roving band of Indians that came near the train. No one knew all he said to them



The Attack Came Swiftly

INDIANS

but they did not linger about the train after the Englishman's death.

Slowly moved the caravan day by day. There were roving restless Indians seen now and then but no trouble came. Bob and the Hawk brought plenty of antelope and buffalo meat to camp.

It was the Hawk who taught these hunters the trick of enticing antelopes to come near and be shot. The trick was very simple in itself. When antelopes were seen a reasonable distance away the Hawk rode as if to pass them by, dismounted, and started his pony back toward camp. Then placing a red handkerchief or some other gaudy object on a stick, usually the ramrod from his rifle, which he stuck in the ground he would lie down in the grass thus concealing himself from the antelopes. So great was the curiosity of these animals that they would be irresistibly drawn to inspect the strange thing wav-

BOB, THE PIONEER

ing above the grass. Hesitatingly, they would come forward to gaze, stopping again and again. When they came within proper range the hunter picked out the one he wanted and shot it. The same trick could be worked on the same herd many, many times.

Finally Santa Fe was reached with cattle and men in fine condition. Old Bull's apprehension of trouble with red men had seemingly been needless.

A long stay, occasioned by some misunderstandings about delivery and collections for the freight, was made in Santa Fe. For that reason the last train to leave Santa Fe that year was Bull's.

Grazing for the cattle was not so good from the start. The hot winds, the early frosts and the grazing of the oxen of many passing trains had reduced the forage along the trail to the minimum. As the caravan proceeded the procuring

INDIANS

of proper feed for the cattle was more and more difficult. Here and there were evidences of battles with hostile Indians; the charred remains of wagons that had been burned by the Sons of Ishmael; bones of cattle and horses killed in battle and in many instances human bones among them. These silent reminders of tragedy made the trail more dreary than usual.

Few Indians were seen along the trail and those that were encountered were not as friendly as usual. One night when Bob and the Hawk were standing watch, the latter silently appeared at Bob's side and in the sign language told his friend that hostile Indians were in the vicinity. Then noiselessly they went into camp and notified the boss. The men were awakened with as little noise as possible. The cattle were quietly driven inside the corral and the plainsmen under arms waited for further report from

BOB, THE PIONEER

the scouts. By and by Bob and the Hawk returned to camp and said that an attacking party was being formed. The men were placed under strict orders to await in silence the coming attack and thus they waited until far past midnight. During this delay Bob asked the Hawk how he could identify the leader of the attacking party and the Hawk suggested that he should seek out the warrior on the best mount. Bob made up his mind that since they were so hopelessly outnumbered he would seek to shoot the leader in the hope that this would break the morale of the wild plainsmen.

About three o'clock in the morning the attack came swiftly. The fierce war cries of the attacking Indians, as the warriors rode in a circle around the corralled trainmen and gradually came closer and closer, the rattle of fire arms and rumble of horses' hoofs all con-

INDIANS

tributed to the hideousness. When the attack was well under way the plainsmen were startled by hearing an Indian war cry in their midst. Looking up they were surprised to see the Hawk as he stood on top of a prairie schooner and sounded the panther cry of his own clan. This device had its effect. Immediately the encircling warriors closed in and increased their yelling and shooting. They were met by a volley from the rifles of the freighters. The cordon of mounted warriors drew closer and closer. Bob had left the interior of the corral and was lying under one of the wagons waiting for his mark and finally deciding which was the leader, carefully aimed and fired. Then he heard the receding of the Indians and noted that they were carrying the dead with them. It was at this time that the Hawk broke from the corral on his mount, raised his bloodcurdling war

BOB, THE PIONEER

cry and followed the receding savages.

When daylight came the Hawk returned to camp driving a dozen or more Indian ponies ahead of him. Attached to his belt were the scalps of half a score of his red enemies. Old Bull was right. The Hawk was a demon in a fight. The plainsmen after roll call found that they had no men killed but several wounded. Bob who got an arrow through his arm and the Hawk who had only one wound, not serious, were able to ride. No one tried to make the Hawk release the Indian ponies although all thought it dangerous to keep them. But they were the Hawk's trophies and all the men knew he would not release them.

Slowly the caravan rolled eastward. Each day the cattle became more exhausted from lack of proper food. Snow covered the plains and the storm gods seemed to rule over the waste lands. One

INDIANS

day at the noon meal a scout dashed in announcing that horsemen in great numbers were coming and the boss ordered a corral made. But the Hawk said, "They are white men."

"How can you tell?" said old Bull.

"I know," said the Hawk.

Believing that the Hawk did know the boss delayed formation of the corral and soon it was plain to all that they were not hostile Indians but a company of cavalry that had been sent out from Fort Leavenworth. Soon the cavalrymen and plainsmen were camped together and the soldiers accompanied the train toward Fort Leavenworth.

After the soldiers came the Hawk requested to be relieved. To his "brother" Bob he said, "I don't like this life. I want to be free. Only in war do Indians obey a master. I'm going to my people. It is not far from here. With these ponies

BOB, THE PIONEER

and these scalps I can please the Osages. I can also take a squaw and, Bob, I've decided which one it will be. My brother, I go but until death we are friends." Bob took him to the wagon boss and old Bull released the Indian.

That night with his herd of ponies and three hundred dollars in money that the boss paid him the Hawk told Bob goodbye and disappeared in the direction of the Osage Indian Reservation.

CHAPTER XVI

CIMARRON CROSSING

Out on the great plains along the Santa Fe Trail many unusual incidents occurred that were not soon to be forgotten. Many scenes and incidents in Bob's life on the Trail he never forgot. For instance, soon after he became wagon boss there was a frozen river to be crossed and without any hesitancy Bob took the lead in cutting the ice away and then waded the cold water to lead the frightened animals and to encourage the more timid ones among the bull-whackers. But, of course, Bob never forgot that river crossing, the "cold bath" or the unpleasant sensation of wearing wet, frozen clothing that he experienced when he came up out of the

BOB, THE PIONEER

river into the near-zero winds that were howling across the wide, waste lands.

At another time, red savage warriors dashed out from behind a desolate mound as the unsuspecting freighters were plodding by and a bloody fight followed. Of course, he could never forget that place and always in passing Bob turned aside and stood for a moment by two low mounds where two of his comrades lie even to this day. Surely he never forgot that scene either. At still another time a funnel shaped black storm roared across the long row of wagons and teams that were slowly moving on the trail and almost instantly wreckage, injured animals and men were lying on the plains in the storm's wake. This was not readily forgotten either. At another desolate place on the plains Bob and his men once found plainsmen camped without food or water, and near-

CIMARRON CROSSING

ly dead from thirst. They had been attacked by Indians and all their stock and supplies taken. Two of the men were wounded. Near by were seven graves where they had buried their comrades. This place was never forgotten either.

But of all the places along the Trail that remained vivid in Bob's memory the Cimarron Crossing seemed to stand out with the greatest distinctness. If you will look at the map of Oklahoma, you will see that from the northwest portion of that state there projects a strip of country westward. That strip of country is bounded on the north by Colorado, on the south by Texas, and it extends westward to New Mexico. When this strip of country was added to the Cherokee Indians' lands it was called the Cherokee Outlet. It was intended to be an outlet through which the Cherokee Indians might enter the buffalo hunting

BOB, THE PIONEER

grounds. At the present time, this strip of country is divided into three counties: Beaver County on the East, Texas County in the middle, and Cimarron County on the extreme west. This county was so named because the headwaters of the Cimarron River are located here.

Across this Cherokee Outlet, or Cimarron Country as it was called, ran the Santa Fe Trail. The crossing of the Cimarron River in this land was a dreary, dreaded place. Many freighters had bad luck here; sometimes it was flood waters, sometimes it was quicksand, but more often it was Indians that caused the trouble.

Freight trains were often attacked here. Sometimes the men would all be killed and the animals and supplies taken by the Indians. The wagons would be burned but what Indians did it one

CIMARRON CROSSING

could not know for many tribes passed that way.

One day as Bob's train approached the Cimarron Crossing a scout returned to report that another freight train was at the crossing and evidently in trouble as they were not at the regular crossing. After going forward again the scout returned to report that these freighters had encountered quicksand at the old ford and after rescuing the animals the plainsmen had been compelled to cut away a steep high bank in order to get down to the river and make another crossing. At this time they had just crossed the Cimarron River at the new ford.

When Bob's train arrived he was delighted to find that the wagon boss of the other train was old Bull Warner. At once old Bull took Bob to one side and said, "I am expecting trouble, Bob. Here is a young one that rode in just a little

BOB, THE PIONEER

while ago on an Indian pony which was almost dead from over-riding. He says that he is a white boy and has been a captive among the Comanche Indians. He also says that the Indians will pursue him and kill him unless we protect him. I am mighty glad you are here because it will probably take all of our forces to stand off this bunch of 'Comanche Indians.'"

The boy said his name was Joe and he remembered that he had once lived in a big town and that his father had traded with the Indians. He said he had gone with his parents to the salt works near Grand River and there had been trouble. He did not know where his mother and father were but suspected they had been killed by someone. For many years he had lived with the Indians as the son of an old squaw called Prairie Rose.

While the two men were engaged in

CIMARRON CROSSING

this conversation mysteriously and silently two plainsmen appeared. They had evidently avoided being seen by the scouts or the men until they were within speaking distance. Raising their hands in the peace sign they rode forward and then the elder one spoke, "Well, howdy, Bull! Howdy, Bob! How are you? This youngster with me is Kit Carson. He is my friend. Maybe you boys know him. I picked him up at Fort Bend. We are just going scouting down in the Indian country and I asked the youngster to go along with me. Indians are a good deal uneasy in this territory now on account of the government's intention to bring in another big bunch of Cherokees from Georgia.* You boys better keep a sharp lookout because there seems to be trouble in the air in

*Georgia—Enforced removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia was in 1838.

BOB, THE PIONEER

several directions." The speaker was none other than Jim Bridger.

Camp was made. The guard was doubled and peace had seemingly settled down upon the camp when one of the look-outs announced Indians coming from the east. Soon a band of Indians rode up within hailing distance and requested a conference. The two wagon bosses, Bull and Bob, walked out to confer with the Indians but since neither of the white men spoke Comanche very well, and none of the Indians could talk English, the interview was not entirely satisfactory. But by the use of sign language the situation was fairly understood.

The Indians said that the boy had run away from their camp and that they had trailed him up the Cimarron River for three days. Finally, Bob offered to give the Indians three sacks of sugar if they would leave the boy with the plains-



Jim Bridges Leads the Parley

CIMARRON CROSSING

men. This offer was refused and the white men returned to camp to get Bridger to act as spokesman for them if he would do so.

When they presented the matter to Bridger he said he could talk Comanche fairly well and he also said he would act as spokesman, provided that while he was doing the talking he was really to be in command and the plainsmen should not do anything except as he directed until the interview was over. To this they all agreed and the four men, Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, old Bull, and Bob, left their rifles in camp but wearing their side arms went forth and met a group of the Indians for a general conference.

“You know me?” inquired Jim Bridger.

“Yes, we know the great scout. We know he is honest and just. We came for our boy who ran away. The great scout

BOB, THE PIONEER

will tell the bull-whackers to give us the boy."

Then Bridger said, "This is a white boy. Where did you get him?"

The Indians said they had found him when he was a very small boy. He was concealed in a hollow stump after a battle which they did not see.

"How do you know it was a battle?"

"There were dead bodies," said the Indians.

"Where was this?" Bridger said.

The Indians said it was over by the great salt works near the Grand River. Suddenly Bridger turned to the chief and said, "Where is the man that is this boy's foster father? Bring him here!" Then an old Indian stepped forward. "Can you lie to the Great Spirit and make Him believe it?" said Bridger.

"No," said the Indian.

CIMARRON CROSSING

"Can you lie to me and make me believe it?" asked Bridger.

"No," said the Indian.

"Then tell me how you got this boy," said the scout.

"They have told," said the Indian.

"You lie!" shouted Bridger. "Tell the truth!" But the Indian was silent. Turning to the chief, Bridger said, "You know I don't like a crooked tongue. This young warrior, Bob, has offered you three sacks of sugar for the boy. This boy now knows that he is not an Indian. He will never be any good to you. Take the sugar and leave the boy."

"No," said the chief. "We came for the boy. Many warriors are coming up the Cimarron River. We want the boy. We must have him."

"Be careful. These young men are warriors. They have much sugar which tastes good but they also have much hot

BOB, THE PIONEER

lead which is not so pleasant in the stomach," said Bridger.

"No," said the chief.

Then the four men turned to go to their own encampment. They had not gone more than one-half the distance when from behind a thick clump of trees and bushes there came a flight of arrows. One of them pierced the muscle of Bob's leg below the knee and instantly the men turned ready to shoot but before they could fire Bridger called, "Hold it! Don't fire. You agreed to obey me. Walk on to camp as if nothing had happened. I'm going back."

And back he went. For a long time he was in earnest conversation with the chief. He never told what the conversation was about but when he returned to camp he said, "Boys, get ready, it is to be a fight."

It is not known who made the sug-

CIMARRON CROSSING

gestion but soon a number of men secured the black axle grease from the hubs of the wagons' wheels and with this drew on the canvass of each of the covered wagons in large letters, "U. S." This sign it was thought the Indians would respect. All the men, all cattle and all horses were inside a large circle made by the wagons. Ammunition was out, guns were ready and everybody knew the battle might begin at any moment.

Bob, himself, was anxious for the battle. It was hard to restrain himself after he had received an insulting wound and had not been able to strike back because of his word to Bridger. Still Bridger said, "Do not get in a hurry, boys. We are pretty well fixed here. Wait."

No one could understand why the Indians did not begin battle unless they knew what the U. S. meant and feared the soldiers or preferred to wait until it was

BOB, THE PIONEER

dark before they began. Just as daylight began to fade a band of Indians was seen coming from the south. Outside of gunshot range they halted, made the peace sign and when it was answered one of them advanced. Bridger said, "Boys, those are not Comanches. They are Osages and I know they are not friendly with the Comanche." Then Bob recognized the leader and called out, "Come on in, Hawk!"

The Hawk was mounted upon a magnificent black stallion. At once Jim Bridger said, "Kit, do you see it. What a horse!"

"I never saw his equal," said Kit Carson.

Bob was standing by the Hawk talking. The two scouts soon called Bob, and Kit said, "Bob, where did that Osage get that horse?"

"It is a trophy of revenge," said Bob.

CIMARRON CROSSING

Then he told Kit and Jim of the English nobleman's death by the hand of Comanche Indians and the Hawk's revenge. "The Hawk just got the stallion a few days ago and he has several fresh Comanche scalps on his belt," added Bob.

"Let him bring in his warriors," said Jim Bridger. "We need them."

Bob called the Hawk to join them. Then the Hawk came forward and after a talk ordered his warriors to ride inside the enclosure and told them to remain there. Then to Bob and Bull he said, "My warriors have many guns and I would like to have a try at those Comanches." But in spite of all urging by the young men the old scout, Bridger, said, "Not yet."

When darkness came on no one except a scout now and then was allowed to leave the inner circle and everyone was told to keep awake and ready. Soon after

BOB, THE PIONEER

midnight the Hawk returned from scouting to say that the Comanches had left. They had gone down the Cimarron Valley. Then calling his own warriors together he made ready to follow them. At last, going to Bob, he said, "Brother, now is your chance to come with me and avenge that wound. I know you want to go." Although Bob did want to go he had to refuse as he had the responsibility of his men and of the freight train entrusted to his charge. This he explained to the Hawk who said, "That is too bad."

But old Jim Bridger said, "Not so bad either, Bob, when you consider that your keeping a hold of yourself saved your life and all this outfit. If you had fired when you were wounded all of us would have been killed. In Indian trouble always try to save your hair and if you do you are lucky, that's all."

And so once again the Hawk parted

CIMARRON CROSSING

from his friends, this time following a band of Comanche Indians for whom he had no love. But he promised not to attack the Comanches if they went straight home. However, the freighters felt sure that the Comanches would not come again to try to get the runaway boy, because if they tried to do so they would most certainly face the Hawk's warriors. The boy, Joe, stayed with the freighters.

At dawn Bridger and Carson rode down the valley of the Cimarron and the freight wagons rolled on westward toward Santa Fe. After the freighters returned from Santa Fe inquiries were made and finally the boy, Joe, was sent to St. Louis where his mother was.

CHAPTER XVII

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

It would be a long, long story to tell all of the incidents in Bob's life on the Santa Fe Trail for again and again he crossed and recrossed the great American desert; met the Indians, both in peace and in war; crossed the limitless prairies through storms and sunshine but always "carried on."

It was an afternoon of autumn sunshine and quiet about the public square in the little town of Independence when it was learned that an overland freight train was approaching. This news seemed to electrify the tradesmen who began to display their wares and to arrange for securing a portion of income from these

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

teamsters who usually spent their money as soon as they were released and paid.

In this Missouri town there were, as in other towns, churches, choir leaders and singers. It so chanced that the choir leader of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was seated on the veranda of the old Southern Hotel overlooking the main street of the town along which the overland train would soon pass, and by chance also three of the girls of his choir were passing at this particular time. The leader called down to the street and invited the girls to come up and see the freighters pass by. Two of these girls had often seen freight trains, but Nellie, who had but recently come to Independence with her family, was anxious to see these plainsmen. The other girls agreed, and the three girls and their choir leader were seated on this elevated veranda when down the street lumbered the dusty, pon-

BOB, THE PIONEER

derous, prairie schooner with the usual noise of rumbling wagons, cracking whips and rough men's voices.

Nellie thought she had never seen such a wild, romantic group of men and she began in her own quick way to question Mr. Rader, the choir leader. "What kind of a countryman is that one, Brother Rader?" said she.

"Oh, he's an Indian. I don't know what kind. You see he is dressed partly as a civilian and not in full tribal costume," replied he.

"This one quick, Brother Rader? He is racing his horse down there at the end of the line. He has cute little bells on his big hat."

"He's a Mexican sent to turn the train down by Majors and Russell's headquarters. They are the owners you know," answered the patient man.

"But look here, Brother Rader.

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

Right under us on that horse. There! No, not that man but the big fellow in buckskin with the black beard. He has two revolvers and a bowie knife in his belt. What kind of a countryman is he?" inquired the girl.

"Hush, you little goose. He might hear you. That's Bob Wright, the wagon boss."

"But is he an Indian or what?" asked she.

"Oh, Nellie, are you dumb? No, he's a white man and said to be the best wagon boss that follows the Santa Fe Trail."

But Nellie continued in her excitement to ask questions and to comment on the wild creatures who were at the time "passing in review." Perhaps she did remember many of the answers given to her by the choir leader but she forgot the name of the wagon boss as later events showed. Even when the caravan with its

BOB, THE PIONEER

dust and noise was beyond her sight she could not forget what she described as the "scarey" appearance of the whole collection, animals and men, composing the overland freight train.

The next Sunday morning Nellie and the other girls sang in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church choir as usual. Whether the other girls looked about over the congregation is not of record but certainly Nellie's particular attention was drawn to one stalwart young man neatly barbered and tailored who came in accompanying a rugged man, evidently his father, and a little gray-haired woman who must have been his mother.

This particular young man was Bob and the change of appearance was due to a change from buckskin to broadcloth and the assistance of a barber. He had not noticed Nellie especially or had not remembered having seen her at the South-

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

ern Hotel, but he did notice her that morning. Whether he got all the minister said or not is not of record either, but immediately after the services he learned from his mother the name of the little singer and as the crowd lingered in the churchyard, Nellie was presented to him by one of her girl friends of the choir.

Readily this stalwart young man and the pretty singer formed a friendship that rapidly grew into the age-old story ever told and retold when man and maiden have loved.

Finally, after these two were engaged to be married, Bob told his father that after one more trip to complete his contract with Majors and Russell he would marry Nellie. His father said, "Well, I'll build a house for you and deed you half the land for it will all be yours some day anyhow."

"No, Dad," said Bob. "I have saved

BOB, THE PIONEER

enough gold money to buy the quarter section (160 acres) of land just west of us and stock it up. Mother has the money hidden for me. She has always kept it."

"Good," said his father. "I knew she kept your gold but I did not know it was so much." But at that, he really told the truth for although he himself had given the mother gold coins to add to Bob's fund he did not think that fund was so large.

Bob bought the land. All through the fall and winter he cleared fields and built fences with one group of men while with another smaller group he built barns and other out-buildings. Last of all he began to build a house for himself and his future partner. This task was not completed when the time came for him to go back over the trail and so he left the finishing and furnishing of the house to his parents.

Nellie had not remembered the name,

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

Robert Wright, and she had never suspected (no one thought to tell her) that her handsome young giant was the big, rough, black-bearded, wild man at the sight of whom she had shuddered when he was in buckskin. Yes, she knew who he was, Robert Wright, a son of Deacon Wright, a prosperous farmer who had lands and slaves and a sweet little lady wife.

It would be hard to describe Nellie's feelings when she at length heard that Bob was said to be none other than the big man who commanded the freight train. Shaking her pretty head, stamping her tiny foot, and frowning she said, "I don't believe it! Bob is a gentleman, so kind and tender. I'm going to ask him."

Ask him she did and he assured her that he was the same person.

"Why didn't you tell me?" she pouted.

BOB, THE PIONEER

“Well,” said Bob, “I don’t know. You never asked me, honey, and I was so busy finding out all about you that I didn’t think. Does that make any difference?”

Nellie seemed for once to deliberate before speaking and then giving Bob her hand she said, “No, I guess not. But surely you are never going to look like that again, are you?”

Laughingly, Bob said, “I don’t know how I looked but we do become somewhat weatherbeaten when on the trail for six months. However, I shall make only one more trip over the Santa Fe Trail and then I’ll go with you to the end of the long, long trail.”

Nellie pleaded against Bob’s going but to no avail. Bob had agreed to go and according to the only code he knew he must go. Failing to persuade Bob to abandon the trip, Nellie breathed her wish to the Highest Court in her daily prayers.

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

But Bob went and when he was gone he knew that not only his mother's prayers but Nellie's were ever being offered for his safe return.

Once on the trail Bob lovingly remembered the prayers of these two Christian women, but in controlling reckless bull-whackers and the wild Indians there is little doubt that Bob relied somewhat upon his hard fists, his two revolvers, his rifle, and his brain power to keep the trail open and the train moving.

When returning from Santa Fe Bob came for the last time to the Cimarron Crossing, and he again remembered the treachery of the Comanches who wounded him from ambush and somehow he almost wished he could have a chance at those same Comanche Indians, but no Indians were to be seen. Camp was made in quietude and seeming security.

That night, however, he doubled the

BOB, THE PIONEER

guard—he himself stayed awake. At frequent intervals he passed about the camp in silence except when he talked quietly to the men who were herding the cattle. At dead of night for no obvious reason he directed the watchers to urge the cattle quietly toward camp whenever they seemed to be about through grazing. He explained that he wanted all the cattle bedded down inside the corral before midnight.

When the major portion of the cattle were inside the circle of wagons and the others were grazing leisurely toward the opening, loud popping (Indians riding in the open could use blankets to make a popping noise not unlike a sound of huge guns) and shrill Comanche yells burst forth on the stillness as a band of wild red men rode furiously in to stampede the cattle. But for once the Indians did not succeed and several of them, either dead

BOB'S LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PLAINS

or wounded, were carried away by their companions. One freighter was wounded but knowing that he had shot from his horse the Indian who had wounded him, he seemed contented.

When the men finally gathered inside the circle and the Indians were gone for the present at least, Bob said, "Well boys, I'm not going to cross the Cimarron again for this is my last trip as a freighter on the Santa Fe Trail; but if I ever come here again I hope I'll have plenty of good marksmen with me and that we can have a daylight try at these treacherous Comanches. I've never been able to settle with them for shooting me from ambush."

Then he detailed a triple guard and all hands waited for the dawn which soon came revealing only waste lands.

Day by day Bob's last trail trip drew nearer to its close. At last he brought his

BOB, THE PIONEER

overland train into his home town—the end of his last trip on the Santa Fe Trail.

Once again, Nellie watched, but this time she peeped through a window. Really, Bob again was black bearded and seemed to radiate power and authority but Nellie did not shudder for to her he was only big, kind Bob—her partner.

Again changed from buckskin to broadcloth and neatly tailored and barbered Bob went to the church. Nellie was not in the choir but with Bob at the altar where the minister pronounced Bob and Nellie man and wife.

How they drove for a few miles on the old Santa Fe Trail and then turned aside through a woodland to their new home is not a part of this story. This is the story of Bob and that is the story of Nellie and Bob for the twain were one.

THE END





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